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## CONTENTS.

	PAGE		PAGE
EVENTS OF THE WEEK...	693	LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:—	
POLITICS AND AFFAIRS:—		The Future of Palestine.	
The New Bureaucracy ...	696	By H. Sidebotham... ..	707
The Creation of a Paper		Tchecho-Slovaks and Jugo-	
Army ... ..	697	slavs. By Palve Ostovic	707
The Perils of Preference ...	698	The Suffering in Syria	
The Necessity for State		and Palestine. By Henry	
Purchase ... ..	699	T. Hodgkin ... ..	708
Why America Comes In.—		POETRY:—	
II. ... ..	700	Quos Æquus Amavit. By	
A LONDON DIARY. By A		John Sargeant ... ..	708
Wayfarer ... ..	702	THE WORLD OF BOOKS. By	
LIFE AND LETTERS:—		Penguin ... ..	709
"All in a Garden Fair" ...	703	REVIEWS:—	
War and Metaphysics ...	704	James Joyce. By H. G.	
LETTERS FROM THE DO-		Wells ... ..	710
MINIONS:—		Capital and Progress ...	712
The Liberal Revival in		Slings and Arrows ...	714
Canada. By Hespericus...	706	Gregorovitch ... ..	714
		THE WEEK IN THE CITY. By	
		Lucellum ... ..	716

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## Events of the Week.

SIR EDWARD CARSON'S speech on the Navy Estimates is remarkable for the frankness with which it dealt with a most difficult problem. He neither belittled the past achievements of the submarines nor under-stated the future. The trouble is not yet cured, and "no single magic remedy exists or will probably exist." That is the real gravity of the situation. The actual casualties inflicted on our shipping, though serious, are not critical; but as we have no specific safeguards against the peril, there can as yet be no confidence that the sinkings will not multiply. If a number of submarines can be sunk and the frequency of attack upon them be increased, the remaining crews will have their ardor of attack damped. This will not prove a factor of much importance until the number of armed vessels is increased. Seventy-five per cent. of these vessels escape, even when they carry only one gun. Only twenty-four per cent. of unarmed vessels survive attack. The reason for this is plain. When a submarine attacks an unarmed vessel, it steams on the surface at considerable speed and can maintain a distance which renders it perfectly safe from counter-attack. In attacking an armed vessel the submarine is forced to submerge, when its speed is considerably reduced, it cannot use its guns, and it must expose at least its periscope at a short distance from its victim. The attacked vessel has therefore improved chances of escape.

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DURING the last two months the number of armed vessels has increased by 47.5 per cent. And apparently we have overcome the scruple of Neutrals as to the admission of armed vessels as non-belligerent. This seems to be the one reply to the submarine attacks, though it is only a means of escape, and not of putting an

end to the peril. The vessel which escapes to-day will have to risk attack to-morrow. The actual losses during the first eighteen days of February amounted to 134 vessels of 304,596 tons, and during the same period 6,076 vessels of over 100 tons entered ports of the United Kingdom, while 5,873 left. There were, therefore, 12,000 vessels risked, and only 134 lost, which represents about one per cent. If the average were to be continued the losses would amount to about 500,000 tons a month, over a third, but not a half, of our present tonnage. Even at our maximum estimated shipbuilding we could only reduce this to a quarter of our total shipping. Such a loss is about 100,000 a month higher than the casualties in December; but is far from the 1,000,000 tons which the Germans expected.

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In addition, the enemy has partially scared the Neutrals from the seas. His success is by no means sweeping; and it is impossible to suppose that the bulk of the shipping will remain in port. Neutral tonnage may also be chartered by the Allies. Of British shipping we have lost at a rate of 10,000 tons a day, and this alone, if continued, would seriously reduce our sea transport. One of Sir Edward Carson's reassuring statements dealt with the losses of submarines. It is obvious that no very accurate estimate can be given of this factor of the problem. A submarine naturally sinks on attack, and no one can say whether it rises again. One submarine has actually been captured with its crew; others have certainly been sunk. Evidence as to some of the casualties is slight, and it is preferable to take Sir Edward's tone of caution in regard to them. But the point of importance is that we had forty encounters with the submarines in the first three weeks of the month. Submarines are very poorly equipped for defence. In spite of the new double-skins and bulkhead arrangements, they can be rammed with ease even by a merchantman. And their mechanism is so delicate that they spend about a third of their time in being overhauled.

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It is much easier to realize the gravity of the situation when we ignore the enemy's account of it. Admiral von Capelle, the Secretary for the Admiralty, who was one of the few to escape a decoration for the Jutland "victory," spoke by a coincidence at about the same time as Sir Edward Carson. In this country such a speech would depress us by its thinly disguised duplicity. The campaign, he said, had not only come up to his expectations; it had surpassed them. He then went on to admit that he could give no figures because the British Press was forced to conceal its losses. This is a tacit admission that his case is mere assumption, and that so far as the British presentment of the facts goes the campaign has disappointed him. The Admiral emphasizes these inferences by asking the German Press not to publish estimates, since these would simply give us the opportunity for belittling the achievements of "the U-boat war." Finally, he said that though a "number" of the submarines, owing to their instructions and their long radius of action, had not returned, they had not to reckon on a single loss. The Germans are simple folk.

THE war is still in a minor key. The operations are merely preparatory to the greater attacks which have not yet begun in any part of the European battlefield. Probably the most important of these smaller fights was the renewed attempt of the enemy to improve his positions in the neighborhood of Jacobeni, in the extreme south-western corner of Bukovina. But the assault, which is described as a "massed attack," was brought to a standstill before reaching the Russian trenches by a skillfully directed barrage. The Western Front has yielded over 3,000 prisoners to the British army alone in the minor operations of the month. From Ypres to Gueudecourt the front held by our army seems to have been subjected to raids, reconnaissances, and small advances. The operations which carried the British front forward last Saturday, on to the southern end of the Serre plateau, are of considerable importance. They alone contributed some 800 prisoners to the total of the week, and they represent another step in reduction of the fortress of Serre. They were also a prompt reply to the German attack which gained ground in Champagne. The French in the offensive of 1915 had pushed their line forward between the Butte de Mesnil and the farm, Maisons de Champagne. It was this salient which gave way before a carefully prepared German attack. The Somme offensive of last July gradually emerged from a multitude of attacks and feints, and the new offensive will probably begin in the same way.

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JUST as we are growing accustomed to an unfamiliar note of appreciation in German military criticism, the General responsible for the operations criticized has suffered a small defeat. The campaign about Kut had been very ably conducted by Sir Stanley Maude, and the Turks have lost heavily. The pressure on them grows in intensity; but they have repelled a frontal attack at Sanna-i-Yat. On February 15th the Turks had been completely cleared from the river bend west of Kut with a loss of 2,000 in prisoners alone. But the attempt to force the position between the Suwaicha marsh and the left bank of the river was only momentarily successful. The first and second lines were seized on a front of 350 and 540 yards respectively, but by two counter-attacks the British right was forced back, and the whole of the new ground was evacuated at dusk. It may be that General Maude will now fall back upon the more obvious method of turning the position from the west, at Kut.

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PRESIDENT WILSON pursues his course with deliberation, but plainly he knows whither he is moving. It is authoritatively stated that his next step will be to go to Congress for power "to employ the land and naval forces of the United States and to detain any vessels . . . to prevent a violation of American obligations under the law of nations." This is not a declaration of a formal state of war, but it would in certain circumstances authorize acts of war. The President is going slowly for two reasons. In the first place, the Bryanist pacifists are strong. It is desirable that as many of them as possible should be induced, step by step, to move with the President. In the second place, the States are far from being prepared, in a military sense, even for minor operations. Preparations are going forward, so that a dilatory diplomatic procedure involves no real delay in the effective utilization of the potential power of the States.

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THE scheme for devitalizing and misdirecting the essential strength of the nation, known as "National Service," has, nominally at least, been stripped of its

compulsory element. A "pledge" to this effect is to be inserted in the Bill, but the powers given to the Director-General, or to be transferred to him under the Defence of the Realm Act, may well make it of no effect. The immediate purpose of the Bill, as explained by Sir George Cave, is to transfer men from "essential" to "non-essential" trades, both of which are scheduled. "Cotton" is for some reason not included in the "essential" trades, though woollens and hosiery are. But the fact is that no such transference will take place voluntarily on a large scale, for there are very few to volunteer. Practically the whole strength of the nation is already at work on the war and its allied services. In Yorkshire, for example, which is at high pressure, only a few hundred recruits have been obtained. But this will not satisfy the Compulsionists. They are bent on creating a paper army and depriving the country of the power to sustain itself or its Allies.

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MR. PONSONBY on Tuesday raised the whole question of the prolongation of the war and the failure of negotiations in an impressive and tactful speech, to which the House listened attentively. His view of the German submarine campaign was that it is the desperate reply of an enemy who had derived from our published intentions the impression that we were not prepared to consider a negotiated peace. This country entered the war with no ideas of aggrandizement, but the Allied Note (together with Mr. Walter Long's declaration on the German Colonies) outlined a policy of conquest. At Constantinople, in Mesopotamia, and in the demand for the break-up of Austria-Hungary, the Entente was playing with a policy of aggression. A nation which goes to war with clean hands must come out with empty hands. Mr. Trevelyan, Mr. Snowden (who pointed out that on the Rossendale basis their group would, with proportional representation, be 150 strong in the House), and Mr. MacDonald followed on the same lines; and Mr. Noel Buxton contributed a specially weighty argument that our interest lay in keeping an open mind with regard to the German colonies. On this point Mr. Walter Long unsaid his speech, but it is far from clear what he means now. Mr. Bonar Law's general reply reiterated his familiar position. He wished to punish Germany, but he believed in a Peace League. Nevertheless, he asked what there was to prevent Germany from repeating this war, five-and-twenty years hence. Surely the League is the answer to that question. That is its purpose. No military victory is likely to be so complete that recovery within a generation will be impossible. That is the reason why alone it cannot re-settle Europe. There must be a political reorganization.

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THERE is no one in either House who can make the problems of the East so interesting as Lord Curzon, and his speech of Tuesday on Persia and the German Bagdad schemes was as readable as it was optimistic. He took, of course, the more alarming view of German ambitions in the East, as a few years ago he used to take the more alarming view of Russian ambitions. His argument, indeed, treated it as a self-evident proposition that for Germany to have planned any expansion whatever in the East was a challenge to ourselves and a threat to civilization. That attitude, adopted in turn towards one Power after another, must doom the world to continual unrest. We see no reason to regret the earlier attitude of Mr. Balfour and the later attitude of Lord Grey, who were both willing to make terms with the purely economic

ambitions of Germany. Her political ambitions in Turkey are quite another matter, and they, no doubt, have been pursued with her usual duplicity. Lord Curzon presented an interesting sketch of the progress of Turco-German plans during the war in Persia. At one time as many as a hundred German agents were at work there, attempting to raise the Persians against us. They represented the Kaiser as the protector, and even as the adherent, of Islam. They had considerable success with the Persian Nationalists, who of course hoped to throw off the Russian yoke and to restore the Constitution. The Swedish *gendarmes* officers (always anti-Russian) also joined in these schemes. Though the Ameer of Afghanistan stood firm, our position throughout the Middle East was at one time in grave peril.

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OUR answer was to create an armed Persian police of about 11,000 men under Sir Percy Sykes and a staff of Anglo-Indian officers. This force, with 800 Indian troops and some Bakhtiari levies and Major Keith's force in the East, has succeeded in mastering Central and Eastern Persia, and opening the roads round Shiraz and Ispahan. In the North the Russians seem secure. On the other hand, Lord Curzon did not conceal the fact that Turkish armies still occupy 30,000 square miles of Western Persia. He hoped much from the enhancement of our prestige through the operations at Kut, and from the revolt of the Shereef of Mecca. Lord Crewe, who followed him, gave a grave warning against undue optimism, and bade us not expect rapid changes either in Mesopotamia or in Persia. While attention is necessarily directed to the fresh military information in Lord Curzon's statement, its political aspects must not be lost sight of. The creation of a permanent Anglo-Indian police in Southern Persia (which Lord Grey had always opposed or delayed) makes a further stage in the partition of the country, adds to our Imperial commitments, and postpones, if it does not veto, the effective restoration of any single national Persian Government.

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A SERIOUS turn has been given to Irish discontent by the arrest in Dublin and elsewhere of some thirty persons under the Defence of the Realm Act. They include Mr. Darrell Figgis, the poet and novelist, and some officials of the Gaelic League, the body which promotes the study of the Irish language and literature, and has been suspect since the outbreak of last Easter. The action must be closely watched, for Irish politics have reached a critical and revolutionary stage, and the work of the Home Rule movement may be undone in a few weeks.

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THE formation of a "National Alliance of Employers and Employed" will, we hope, be a step in the right direction. We shall be better able to judge it when we see more clearly upon what principles it is based. Pre-war differences between social classes are not to be annihilated with a mere stroke of the pen, or even with a feeling of mutual goodwill born of the national situation. Clear thinking is what is needed on both sides; and, if there is to be a change of relationship, there must be not simply a willingness to co-operate, but some common ground wide enough to justify co-operation. To our mind, this common ground can be discovered only in a frank recognition by both parties of the principle of industrial self-government; with its consequence in a readiness to consider favorably all possible schemes for

giving the workers, through their Trade Unions, an increasing share in the control of their working lives.

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ON this basis, there is much to be said for co-operation; but we must, of course, look to the new National Alliance of Employers and Employed to show us that it rests upon this principle. It has not as yet attached Labor leaders of importance. We agree fully with the idea that the problems of demobilization should be dealt with as far as possible by the joint action of employers and trade unionists. The present venture depends on its power to gain the confidence of the working class, and the utterances of the Minister of Labor have not helped it. The British Workers' National League, which has joined hands with the Federation of British Industries to form the Alliance, is in no sense a representative Labor body. If proposals of this kind are to have a good result, they must be put forward by accredited and responsible Labor organizations.

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IT is just a year since the Germans began the long-sustained and bitterly-contested battle which carried them to within a few miles of Verdun. The vicissitudes of the struggle in the narrow area east of the Meuse include the two French counter-attacks of October and December which proved such remarkable tactical triumphs. Even before these recoils the enemy had begun to admit that the campaign of Verdun had been a failure. But the French successes emphasized the point by carrying the line back to its position on February 25th last year, at the end of the first phase of the German attack. They were evidence of a more vital success. An order issued by Marshal von Hindenburg, with regard to the French attacks, has lately fallen into the hands of our army. It points out that these reverses were "serious and regrettable." The number of prisoners (which was "unusually large for German troops), some of whom surrendered without offering serious resistance and without suffering heavy losses, shows that the moral of some of the troops engaged was low. The old spirit of the German infantry must be revived by means of training and the strictest drill, as well as by educating and instructing the men. It is a matter of vital importance to our army that proper steps be taken." Such words need not be labored. They are a convincing testimony to a form of moral attrition that must bite into the German army more and more deeply as the war goes on.

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THE Government are edging towards the re-enactment of the C.D. Acts. The war has brought about an immense increase of syphilis, due to the dissolution of family ties, and the loosening of every kind of restraint, the creation and segregation of great armies of single men, who are kept in camps or roam the streets at night, and the sudden conversion of scores of thousands of young girls into industrials. The ameliorating agencies are the welfare movement, and the work of the Y.M.C.A. and the Church Army. The Government, however, turns to punishment of various classes of offenders. Brothel keepers are to be heavily fined and imprisoned, soliciting is to be punished with imprisonment, and so may an infected person having sexual intercourse or soliciting it. This provision will in the main be directed against women, and the police will work it by a general supervision of the prostitute class. The action of such a law seems likely to lead to endless recriminations and much injustice. It appears to us to be quite impracticable.



## Politics and Affairs.

### THE NEW BUREAUCRACY.

AN incident of no slight significance occurred in the House of Commons on Thursday week. A Conservative member, Major Newman, asked the Prime Minister whether the Government had considered the expedient of setting up Parliamentary Committees before which Ministers of Departments could appear, or whether he would allow Parliament to decide this policy for itself. Both these requests, Mr. George's deputy, Mr. Law, refused. The change would, he said, be "very undesirable." The answer is surprising neither in substance nor in the fact that it contradicts an earlier utterance of the Prime Minister. When Mr. George took office, he found it necessary to reassure Parliament that its control of the Executive would remain unimpaired under his plan of substituting the individual responsibility of each Minister for the collective responsibility of the whole Government. Obviously this control is weakened if Parliament, in striking at an incompetent Minister, loses the power of shaking, or even destroying, the Government. The Prime Minister, therefore, hinted that Parliament might seek compensation by extending its power of interrogating the heads of departments. This is the French and Continental system of Parliamentary Commissions or Committees, and Mr. George expressly approved it. It was, he thought, "more effective" than our own, and it had helped to save France from one or two serious blunders. The nature of Mr. George's reference may be guessed. The intervention of the French Chamber, through its Commissions, has had an excellent effect in improving the French commands. The working of the method was lately examined in Paris by a deputation from our own Parliament, and was warmly approved. It has now been roughly rejected. Why?

Because Mr. George's governing "system" is designed not to exalt Parliament, but to depress it, and to transfer duties from it to the Executive and the assistant Bureaucracy. The new Secretary of the Treasury, whose work is inalienably connected with the House of Commons and its prime function of financial control, is not a member of Parliament. The Prime Minister himself rejects the rôle of every one of his predecessors who in war or in peace conducted the policy and sustained the spirit of the nation. Ostentatiously dissociating himself from Parliament, he commits its leadership to a gentleman of inferior capacity and a very limited record of public service. A new double screen of bureaucrats is interposed between the War Directorate and the heads of Departments, whose responsibility to Parliament has hitherto been direct, and transmits to them the decrees of the Upper Five. The first is the so-called Cabinet Secretariat, almost a Ministry in itself. The second is a little body of *illuminati*, whose residence is in the Prime Minister's garden, and their business to cultivate the Prime Minister's mind. These gentlemen stand in no sense for a Civil Service Cabinet. They are rather of the class of travelling empirics in Empire, who came in with Lord Milner, and whose "spiritual home" is fixed somewhere between Balliol and Heidelberg. Their function is to emerge from their huts in Downing Street, like the competitors in a Chinese examination, with answers to our thousand questions of the Sphinx. It is in keeping with these loose conceptions of government that the raw material of policy should no longer be tested by the House of Commons. Large un-thought-out schemes

of "National Service" are first commended to public meetings, and then launched in the shape of orders to the general public. Parliament only intervenes when the policy is determined, and some confirming authority is found to be necessary. This method goes far beyond the organization of war services. Non-Parliamentary Committees examine the entire ground of our fiscal policy, and uproot it in a "letter to the Prime Minister." The Departments naturally make free play with the new reign of licence opened out to them. The old doctrine of "collective responsibility" may have been pressed too far. But it is the rule under which all committees, public or private, must live, and their policies be shaped and given to the world. The alternative appears in the daily public wrestlings of Mr. Prothero with the War Office for the bodies of agricultural laborers and other subjects of these rude experiments. Maximum prices for consumers fight minimum prices for growers, and grand decisions are given in favor of both and neither. The co-operative idea in government is overlaid by the new notion of competition between one limb and another, till the revolt of the whole Body is threatened. In spite of these distractions, the means of fresh confusions multiply. Daily the huge frame of the new bureaucracy is supplied with fresh nerves and limbs. A few flowers of decorative demagoguery adorn the costly structure; but its mass is sheer, solid officialism. A fresh governing force, with a firm vested interest and an ever-growing security of tenure, is being daily created, moulded, and fortified, essentially secret and irresponsible, and therefore in rivalry to Parliament. The air above is thick with flights of *paperasses*: the ground beneath burrowed with warrens of offices. Men used to govern are thrust aside, and those unused to it taught to think that they alone possess the grand secret. People in "business" are presumed to know politics, or to be full of meaning because they have never learned to say what they mean. The Press discovers a totally new standard of merit. The people who ruled the country up to the end of last December (except Mr. George) were corrupt and effete: the men who now rule it (though they are mostly the same people) are Spartans of energy and brimming over with intellect. The nation, which is "up against" a rather hard-thinking lot, is told to shun thought, and does it so successfully as to be almost persuaded that you can grow corn without laborers, carry it without ships, and make soldiers fight without feeding them. The discoverer of these truths, who is asked to explain them a little to Parliament, bridles, and speaks of a Vote of Confidence. A forbidding air of menace hangs over the whole of these proceedings; as if the nation had a whip over its head and a man who meant to use it.

As this force extends, the small existing power of the people to guard their lives and liberties must shrink to still slighter measure. The representative principle is being weakened in the hour when true friends of democracy desire to associate it with foreign no less than with domestic policy. But the authority which such a body as a Foreign Relations Committee might add to Parliament is being hourly distributed among officials whom Parliament never sees. Thus the future of these islands is being settled over the heads of the men and women who live in them. The commitment is even wider than that of 1914. Parliament was then in ignorance of the impending war or of the engagements which determined our share in it. Now, an extra-Parliamentary Conference is called to fix the main lines of the peace, and in the midst of a great war, to settle the taxation of the country when it is finished. Law and liberty are equal sufferers by the process we have described. Power tends



to pass from Cabinets to Directorates, from Parliaments to Executive Committees, from Acts to Orders in Council.

Reactionary Imperialism has thus seized the whole body of Liberal and democratic doctrine, and is making off with it under cover of the war. The governing ideas are not those of Mr. Lloyd George—we do not know what these are—but of Lord Milner. The Press and the Platform do indeed retain a considerable share in the direction of affairs; the first as an organ of suggestion and abuse, and the second as a means of speech in places where there can be no examination of what Ministers say. But the seat of power lies beyond these voices. It is being distributed among thousands of office stools in the jerry-built homes of our new Constitution. Mr. George is the natural instrument of these changes, for his temperament has but slight roots in our English order and tradition. In this sense he is a revolutionary force, but his movement is not towards freedom or to a true democratic order. Mr. George has used Toryism to destroy Liberal ideas; but he has created a Monster which, for the moment, dominates both. This is the New Bureaucracy, which threatens to master England, unless England decides in time to master it.

#### THE CREATION OF A PAPER ARMY.

THE recurring outcry for more men for the Army is again making itself heard. In some quarters it has taken the form of a demand for a million men, though no reason is apparent why it should not be two million or five million. It has no relation to the number of men available, nor even to the precise need of supplying such a number. Its chief strength is the assurance with which it is put forward. If its authors were open to reason, the universality of the call for men would have given them pause. For on whatever side we turn we are met with the same demand. In a word, we are to-day suffering from the sacrifices we have made to this unmeaning call.

We are now in the early days of the most formidable attack from which this country has ever suffered. As a nation we have been singularly free from the direct assaults of an enemy. We have heretofore been able to meet threats to our safety while they were remote. The present submarine campaign carries the war across our threshold, into our very homes. Even if the Germans have not achieved all they set out to do, they have succeeded in imposing upon our shipping casualties that would in a year reduce it to two-thirds of its present bulk. They have also reduced the help of neutral shipping, upon which we have so heavily relied during the war for necessary purposes, both domestic and military. We are on the eve of the greatest military effort we have ever made, an effort which must entail the incessant transport across the Atlantic, the Arctic, and the Channel, of thousands of tons of goods. Prudence compels our military directors to look to no cessation or diminution of this traffic until the end of the war. Yet while we are pledged to the greatest use of our sea communications for the rest of the war, we are also faced with the greatest diminution of our sea traffic. The situation thus conceived would be impossible were it not that relief can be obtained by appropriate measures. These consist in making the sacrifice of all superfluities, even to the extent of reducing our diet to the limit of bare subsistence, and in stimulating the production and transport of foodstuffs at the same time that we strain every nerve to increase

our shipbuilding. But all these expedients, with the exception of the first, mean the finding of more men. Women can help; but the chief part of the effort must come from men. The heavier forms of agricultural and transport work can only be done by men. Almost the whole of shipbuilding is a question of men, and even of strong, vigorous men. Yet the supply of men is limited, and the only power which seems to be able to get men is the Army. We must realize that in expanding the Army at this point we are helping the submarine campaign. We create another mouth to be filled at the same time that we withdraw a potential producer of food. The attempt to organize a new army by this means is illusory.

One expedient that is suggested is the increasing of the age-limit from forty-one to fifty. In making this contribution to the subject, the "Times" adds three lines further on the helpful comment that above thirty-five years "few can stand the hardships of trench warfare." It might also have said that few also can stand the strain of the marching incident to the warfare of movements. What, then, is the aim of these proposals? We can increase the paper strength of our Army by such means; but its effective strength will be no greater. We can provide more imposing numbers, but not more imposing troops. Yet even numbers seem to be the prime preoccupation of some students. The military correspondent of the "Times" produces an imposing array of the number of German divisions now stationed upon the Western front. He states that there are at present 166 divisions, and we are left to assume that these represent the same number of bayonets as the same number of divisions at the beginning of the war. Every student of military affairs knows that this is not the case. The increase in the number of German divisions does not represent the increase in men. The new unit may contain the same amount of artillery; but it probably has no more than 7,000 or 9,000 bayonets. And it is open to us to multiply our divisions similarly from the two million men we have in France. If man-power counts, why not deal with man-power in all cases, and not with units in one and man-power in another? This is the more reasonable since Major Redway informs us that the "United Kingdom is 'stiff' with troops!"

In actual fact this clamor for numbers is irrational. While it is true that a first-rate unit can assimilate a certain proportion of ill-trained men, no unit can make an old man young or a diseased man strong. It is possible that a few men over 35 and a few exceptional men over 40 may be able to stand the strains of modern warfare. But it is *certain* that many under 35 are quite useless for any sort of fighting, and the experience of entering a battle with half one's company in hospital is gravely prejudicial to moral. This point becomes of the first importance now that the Army authorities have adopted the expedient of turning Class C into Class A after a few weeks' training. The procedure is to examine and re-examine men time after time until they are passed for some sort of service. They are then put into training, and after a few weeks they are informed that they have improved so much that they are now fit for Class A. But, again, what is gained by this facile self-deception? The paper Army can be swelled by such means without making the real fighting strength a whit the better. We cannot *make* fit men in a moment. There is a certain average of unsound men, and though we may give them an appearance of health by change of air and healthy exercise, we do not change their physique or improve them organically. We stimulate their rhythm of life a little, and until a strain comes they seem to be stronger. But warfare consists of strains; and in the day of battle it

is the perfectly fit who alone are of use. The consumptive, the diabetic, the ruptured, are doomed to spend most of their time out of the trenches. Some of them never leave hospitals or convalescent homes, and the members of the companies which contain any great proportion of such men never come to know each other, never achieve that instinct for corporate action which differentiates an Army from a rabble.

We have not increased our Army by such means, although we have taken a man from some work he could do. His small contribution to carrying on the State has been lost, and he has been made merely a drain on our resources and a handicap to his company. The war will not be won by quoting certain imposing figures to the enemy; but it may well be lost by the ill-advised withdrawal from labor that the production of such figures entails. If we wish to lose the war, we can easily perform the work of the submarine campaign, without waiting for the German effects, by withdrawing at once *all* farm laborers, transport workers, and shipbuilders. But if we mean to win it, let us scrutinize with the utmost care the precise price we pay for every additional man we embody. Let us recruit men for the fields, the docks, transport services, shipyards, and waste no more time and money over the manufacture of units that are imposing only so long as they are not put to the test.

#### THE PERILS OF PREFERENCE.

THE Report of Lord Balfour's Committee on Imperial Preference is wrapped in a bundle of loose words and supported by nothing in the way of argument. But it marks the definite attack of our Protectionists under the cover of the war. Its resolutions commit their signatories not only to the "principle of preference" for imports from the overseas dominions, but to "an early consideration of the desirability of establishing a wider range of Custom duties, which would be remitted or reduced on the products and manufactures of the Empire and which would form the basis of commercial treaties with allied and neutral Powers." When the demand for a guaranteed price for wheat and other agricultural products within this country after the war is taken duly into account, it will be seen that the real proposal emerging from the fog of war is the "five-ply tariff." Protection for the British Isles is to be accompanied by a series of higher scales of import duties for the Empire, the Allies, neutrals, and enemy countries respectively. This avowal of the wider project must not be left out of mind in considering the narrower proposal of the Report to which a Committee, containing several "Free Traders," appends its signature. We cannot affect surprise that "Free Traders" to whom Free Trade is only an "abstract opinion," while preference is a "principle," should be induced to sacrifice the former to a vague idea of Imperial unity and security. But before the nation commits itself to the conviction that Imperial preferences, grafted on to a general tariff, make either for unity or for security, it will insist upon the application of those practical tests which this document avoids. To those who believe that this war has proved the final futility of international life the temptation to visualize a self-sufficing British Empire may be attractive. A fifth of the inhabitable globe is ours (perhaps a quarter when the war is ended), why should it not afford a safe and adequate supply of all the essential needs of its population in peace or war? To political map-gazers it seems possible enough. Even if we make some immediate common sacrifices in the

process of developing our future Imperial resources, it will, they hold, be justified by defensive and political considerations. But an economic proposal must be submitted to economic tests.

Now the moment these tests are applied, the whole idea collapses. Is it possible for our Empire to become virtually self-sufficing, and will preferences help to make it such? In the process of many suns, it might be possible by artificial aids so to stimulate the production of wheat within the Empire as to make it yield all that is needed for the Imperial consumption under normal circumstances. It would, however, be a slow, a difficult, a dangerous, and a costly process. For hitherto our Empire has only been able to supply about one-third of our imported wheat in ordinary years. Under the most favorable circumstances it has only reached one-half. But, if scarcity of supply is taken for our test, we must consider those lean years when our great Imperial sources simultaneously fail. In 1908, for instance, we drew less than a quarter of our overseas supply from our Empire. However much we stimulated the Imperial production, it is quite evident that years would occur when we should be dependent for our lives upon those foreign markets which we had weakened and estranged by our preferential policy. Nobody can seriously contend that any practical increase either of home agriculture or of Imperial supplies will make us within any calculable period of time approximately self-supporting in essential foods.

The case is even worse for many of our staple materials of manufacture. Practically the whole of our supply of cotton for our greatest manufacture comes from outside the Empire, and for such essentials as rubber, oil, timber, copper, nitrates, we must continue to depend largely or mainly on foreign supplies. Our whole economic system has been built up for generations upon a basis of free access to all world markets. We cannot retain this free access if we deny it to others, nor can we adjust our national system to the loss of this free access. The experiment in Imperial self-sufficiency is not merely doomed to failure; it will endanger our economic life by damaging our power to buy and to sell advantageously in foreign markets. For, having once tied ourselves up to the Imperial markets, we shall not be able suddenly at need to revert to the world markets. The foreign countries, once our good customers, but now injured and offended by our tariffs, will have made other commercial attachments, probably with the Central Powers, which, cut off from Allied trade, will offer the best inducements to the present neutrals. If we thus throw such great sources of foods and materials as the United States and the South American Republics into the arms of Germany, we shall not be able in our hour of need to resume them. There are means of stimulating production within the Empire that are both sound and innocuous, such as the organization of transport and credit, immigration, and a more scientific survey and development of the latent resources of the countries. By such means we can legitimately strengthen the Imperial supply of certain articles for which we at present rely on outside sources. In point of fact, the experience of war has shown the very little danger of this reliance. Free Trade has not, in fact, cut us off from any essential supplies. Nor could the real peril of the modern sea warfare be obviated by any artificially produced Imperial unity. No preferences would secure a safe transport of goods from our overseas Empire. On the contrary, such discrimination as still survives in submarine warfare favors foreign as compared with Imperial importation.

The political folly of the preferential tariff, which was fatal to Mr. Chamberlain's proposal, is greatly



aggravated by the imposition of the war-map on the original proposal. Guaranteed food prices from our farmers will involve a tariff on Imperial imports. Will that step please Dominion farmers and exporters who formerly sent their goods in free? Nor does the new situation do anything to meet the old difficulty that the preferential tariff works with conspicuous inequality for the several Dominions, giving so much to Canada, so little to South Africa. The Balfour Report contains no suggestion for dealing with the troubles that will arise if India and the Crown Colonies are excluded from the right to regulate their own trade and are sacrificed to the interests of the British manufacturer and trader. To inject these new sources of friction into the dangerous world in which we live, and to do it in the name of the unity of the Empire, is an insult to the intelligence of the nation, as well as a new menace to our future.

Again, the small measure of self-sufficiency which could be attained by Imperial Preference must injure our trade relations not merely with foreign nations, but with our Allies. Sir Frederick Smith, who signs a cautious minority report, appears to see this danger. How will it assist our trade and political relations with Russia, if we put a duty on her wheat and hides high enough, first to give protection to our farmers, and secondly to give a preference to Canada, Australasia, and India? Will it please our French Allies, if we raise the tariff on their wines for the benefit of Australia? These are only a few of the more obvious among the practical difficulties which the Committee say they "do not overlook," but the discussion of which they prudently defer. They neither do nor can produce any reasons to support their dogmatic affirmation that "mutual tariff preferences" can be of use "for the purpose of recovering trade lost during the war, of securing new markets, and of consolidating the resources of the British Empire." Nor is there any virtue in their declaration that "measures must be devised to safeguard the interests of the consumer and the rightful demands of labor," though these amiable phrases may have served to induce the two Labor signatories to defy the unanimous verdict of the recent Labor Conference at Manchester, and betray the men who sent them to Parliament. The maxim, *inter arma silent leges* has no valid application to economic laws. It remains as true in 1917 as in 1903 that "in order to give preference to the Dominions, it is necessary to tax food," and that taxing food means raising prices for the workers. It is hardly the moment to introduce new schemes for carrying over in peace-time the peril to our national food supplies which the emergency of war has brought upon us. The passage in this ill-advised and unthinking Report which suggests that preferences can be regarded as a reward to our fellow-citizens overseas for the splendid services and sacrifices they are rendering in the war, will we feel sure, arouse a genuine resentment throughout our Dominions. The blood of Anzac cannot be translated into tariff terms, and the suggestion that anybody here or there imagines that it can is an insult to the true and living spirit of Imperial unity.

#### THE NECESSITY FOR STATE PURCHASE.

If the recent debate in the House of Commons on the proposal to stop the manufacture of beer and spirits did not lead to a definite result, it at least accentuated the deep regret which is widely felt at the failure of the Government, in the spring of 1915, to adopt the scheme of purchase and control which Mr. Lloyd

George then urged upon it. Whatever else that scheme might have done or failed to do, one thing it certainly would have achieved. It would have cut a knot which has baffled statesmen and administrators for more than a century, and given the nation a complete recovery of freedom. That one thing, if the Government had but seen it, was the essential and indispensable thing. Short of it all expedients and policies are vain.

We now see this plainly enough. The summary fate of the proposed liquor taxes, the struggle to secure the suppression of the sale of immature spirits, and the perplexing and, in some respects, discouraging experience of the Board of Control, have helped to awaken a vast number of people to a sense of the futility of efforts and expedients which collide at every point with the pecuniary interests of the trade. The Board of Control has, on the whole, done admirable work under very great difficulties. But the limits of its success were predetermined by the fact that it had to found its restrictions upon an irrational licensing system in which private financial interests necessarily collide with restrictive policies. The evasion of its regulations, and the peculiar and difficult conditions prevailing in particular districts, drove the Board at last to the adoption of tentative schemes of direct control. But its isolated experiments, while valuable as a belated indictment of the basis of our pre-war licensing arrangements, fall far short of the full recovery of freedom of action which is essential to a permanent advance. The experience of the Board nevertheless has had one most important, if unexpected, result. It has exposed the weakness of the compromise which led to the Board's appointment, and, incidentally, has compelled a reconsideration of Mr. Lloyd George's original scheme.

Let us consider some of the outstanding merits of that proposal. Its first and principal advantage is that it would at once restore complete liberty of action to the Government and to the State. Policies would no longer be conditioned, as now and all through the last century, by consideration for vested interests, but would be chosen solely for their effectiveness. Freedom of experiment—a vital freedom in the treatment of social problems—would be restored, and promising solutions would not be ruled out as politically inexpedient. Secondly, licensing regulations, once adopted, would have a free and unhindered trial. They would not be handicapped at the outset by the certainty of collision with private trading interests. They would succeed or fail on their merits. Thirdly, the influence of the liquor trade in municipal and in national politics would be permanently destroyed. The importance of this last consideration, in view of impending tasks of reconstruction, it is not easy to exaggerate. Our past political experience has shown us too plainly the gravity of the menace to public life, even in normal times, when a powerful and wealthy trade, possessing exceptional means of influencing the electorate, disregards the claims of patriotism and subordinates questions of public welfare to the return of candidates "favorable to trade interests."

The question, therefore, is whether we will face the new and greater problems of the period of reconstruction with this menace unremoved. Alternative policies do not remove it. Temporary prohibition, for example, powerful and logical as its appeal is at a time when the nation is threatened with a shortage of food, so far from avoiding political conflict with the liquor trade, would infallibly precipitate it in the critical and crucial days of reconstruction. Nor does the work of the Board of Control remove the danger. The Board's regulations are temporary and provisional. The Board itself will disappear with the war. What is to take its

place? That is a question for which an answer must be found. Some reformers, encouraged by the widespread support which the Board has received, cherish the belief that the long battle against trade opposition and trade interests is at last won, and that the emergency orders can be retained as a permanent part of our licensing arrangements. Let us not deceive ourselves. Some of the ground won by the new restrictions will, we hope, be permanently held. But unless trade interests can be completely eliminated during the war by some such scheme of State purchase as Mr. Lloyd George has proposed, the reaction will be swift and ruinous. The licensed trade, at present, is at a disadvantage, owing to the predominant and overwhelming interests of the war. Once peace is signed it will recover and reassert its power under circumstances that will favor reaction. This is the point to which attention must at once be directed.

Why should we not face the issue squarely now? Will anything be gained by postponement? May not much that is invaluable be lost? We do not overlook the inconveniences of a settlement in war time, nor do we underestimate them, but they are less formidable than prevailing conditions might suggest, and certainly the advantages of a settlement far outweigh the inconveniences. With generations of experience behind us, the drink question is not one which any good citizen would voluntarily leave unsettled for a single unnecessary hour. What are the practical difficulties? There are only two of importance, and both are objections rather than difficulties. The first relates to finance, and the second is the dislike of advanced reformers for any scheme of State control, which they fear—we think unreasonably—would prejudice the chances of prohibition. The former objection is more technical and hypothetical than practical, and is directed primarily to fears for the stability of the national credit. The critics are not seriously concerned with doubts as to the profitableness of purchase as an investment; on this head assurance is comparatively easy. The considerable economies possible by the abolition of competition; the closing of redundant breweries, public-houses, &c.; the concentration of administration; the saving in transport, advertising, and labor, are not questioned. The doubts expressed concern the possible effect of a State purchase scheme in the depreciation of Government securities. This is a point which quite obviously would be considered in any Government scheme. That the danger is an avoidable one is, we think, certain. It depends altogether upon the form which a purchase scheme would take. If the method (not necessarily the basis of valuation) recommended by the Treasury Committee of financial experts which considered the matter in 1915 were followed, the danger would be avoided.

The prohibitionist objection is of a very different kind. In its extreme form, where it is based upon the view that the sale and consumption of alcoholic beverages is a sin, it is useless to discuss it. The objection is obviously not susceptible to argument. It is fatal not merely to State control, but to the establishment of any restrictive licensing system. In its commoner and more reasonable form—the form which distrusts the consequences of State control—the objection, although sincere, is, we believe, profoundly mistaken. If prohibition on a national, or even moderate, scale were probable as a post-war policy the fear would be explicable, and the relative merits of prohibition and of State control could be argued. But prohibition is plainly impossible as a post-war policy, nor can it at any time hereafter be secured unless the ground is cleared for it by some such settlement of the compensation difficulty as State

purchase would provide. Prohibition, no less than other heroic remedies, is impossible without a "clean slate." The hostility of the licensed trade to State control can be met by an equitable scheme of purchase; whereas the hostility of the licensed trade to the confiscatory policy of the advanced prohibitionist is implacable and unyielding, and, with political human nature what it is, fatal to its statutory success. If prohibitionists were wise from the point of view of their own ultimate success, they would welcome a purchase scheme. Their fear that State control would block an advance to prohibition surely misconceives the position. State purchase is but a means to an end. The end itself would be the recovery of freedom of action, and the power to adapt arrangements to public convenience and demand. If prohibition failed of enactment, its cause would not be the recovery of public control, but the weakness of the demand for prohibition. It would be absurd to allege that with the fetters to action removed, and under a democratic Government, public opinion would be less able to assert itself than under conditions which tether and cramp its reforming energies. It is not an unimportant fact that in no country in the world has direct State control barred the way to prohibition. Prohibition in a democratic country is not dependent upon the caprice of Governments or bureaucrats; it is dependent upon public opinion. It will come, here as elsewhere, when public opinion, and particularly Labor opinion, demands it, and is prepared to support it. What practical reformers meantime have to do is to devise the best possible system of regulation and control.

Experienced reformers, by no means theorists, are convinced that in State purchase we have the key to progress. Licensing magistrates, among them the Chairmen of some of the most important and experienced benches in the country, such as Liverpool and Birmingham, find in it the way of release for which they have vainly sought in administrative action. Trade unionists and Labor leaders, as well as large employers, welcome the proposal, and the Press has endorsed it with a warmth and practical unanimity that is unprecedented in the history of the licensing question. If the Government, which again has the proposal under consideration, should decide to act, it may be sure of overwhelming support. To postpone action would be to destroy a great opportunity, and to risk the reopening of barren controversies which have for generations hindered real advance. The country, awakened by the war, wants a real settlement of the drink question. It is in the power of the Government to give it a settlement now.

*[We shall welcome correspondence on this subject.]*

#### WHY AMERICA COMES IN.—II.

THE President has still one very difficult corner to negotiate in his relations with the Allies: he has to reconcile them to a limitation of American liability, a limitation which they may judge exposes them to grave risks. In the "New Republic" article, from which quotation has already been made, occurs the following passage:—

"If you go into the war, on what basis will you go in? Will you sign the pact of the Allies not to make a separate peace? You could not do that. You would not dare to pledge the future of this country in a compact the purposes of which have never been defined. You cannot pledge us to Russia, and Italy, and Japan. You would not entangle us in the ambitions of Italy for the



control of Trieste and the Dalmatian coast, in the ambitions of Russia to obtain Constantinople.

"Yet if we declare war, join the Allies, sign their pact, we have begun for the purpose of vindicating our rights to travel at sea, but we shall end by fighting to change the political control of the Near East. And when it is all over we shall not have the slightest idea whether we have attained the object for which we fought."

After indicating that the only way out of the dilemma is for America to use the occasion of this war to establish the principle of the League to Enforce Peace, the "New Republic" goes on:—

"How can this principle be applied to the present crisis? By announcing to Germany that we shall not only break off negotiations, but aid her enemies until she agrees to abandon submarine warfare against commerce, until she agrees to evacuate Belgium, France, and Serbia, to indemnify Belgium, and to accept the principle that in the future all nations shall use their resources against the power which refuses to submit its quarrels to international enquiry. If Germany accepts this program, we shall agree to resume intercourse and not to furnish special aid to her enemies; we shall agree to become one of the guarantors of Belgium's integrity, and to assist in maintaining the inviolability of buffer states which may be created after the war by refusing to furnish their invaders with supplies of any kind. Furthermore, we shall accord to Germans equal rights with Americans in all American protectorates, and we shall refuse to furnish any kind of aid to any Power which does not apply the open door in its protectorates and non-self-governing territories."

If at this date Germany accepted those conditions, that acceptance would represent such an utter repudiation of her former pretensions that it would in fact mark the complete collapse of Prussian militarism, and the turning towards a fundamentally different policy. America would then be assuming a part in the general Allied aim far greater than that assumed by some present parties to the Alliance (*e.g.*, Japan). If it has been possible to maintain without embarrassment an association with Japan based on a limited commitment, a limitation similar in principle, though differing in degree, should not be impossible with America.

If we make the very simple assumption that the President's one object, besides which nothing else counts, is just that which he declares it to be, the protection of American interests in the only way in which, in this connection, they can be permanently protected—through the firmer establishment of international security and public right—we shall realize that events have justified his choice of roads to that end. The intense preoccupations and emotions of belligerent nations in war-time are a poor qualification for any reliable judgment of a statesman's conduct in the position in which the President has been placed. It is doubtful even whether we have realized the extent of the aid America has already given to the Allied cause. Without that service our cause would indeed be in bad case. But the service which America has yet to render is greater still. It is to furnish at the critical juncture just that element necessary to the final achievement of our own object, which in its ultimate expression is identical with America's.

Whether we shall avail ourselves of that service to the full may well depend upon whether we can show an understanding of America's position more complete than we have sometimes shown in the past; and upon whether we put the emphasis of our effort upon our publicly declared object. May it not be that a large part of the European and American irritation which the President's "hesitation" and "passivism" have produced is due to the fact that we do not take quite seriously the ultimate objects which we proclaim—a world organized for peace and law—and that

the President does? We subscribe to these ideals as a counsel of perfection, of course, but we hardly believe them realizable. We feel that some half-way house—the destruction of German but not of European militarism; the reduction of forces opposed to us, but not the collective control of all forces—alone is serious and practical politics; that to aim for the unattainable is to endanger the attainable. It is commonly doubted whether the President can even commit his own country to the obligations of a League of Nations.

Some of the President's critics base their doubts upon his "impracticable idealism"; others on his alleged surrender to the national desire for material prosperity that reckes not of spiritual ideals; to some his sentimental pacifism causes him to shrink from the inhumanity of war; to others he is too cold and bloodless to share and understand the common emotions of mankind. The very width of the criticism is ground for confidence. The coldness of his intellectual judgment is an assurance that he has not been swept by unexamined emotion to champion impossible ends. It is one of the few happy accidents of these times that the political office which by its constitutional function carries more of real power than the headship of any other State whatsoever, and to which the circumstances of the war have given an unparalleled world-influence as well, should be filled by an intellectual Liberal whose mind is flexible enough to grasp the outstanding truth of the war: that if the ideals of national democracy, which represent the Allied cause, are to live at all, they must grow into ideals of international democracy. With less of coldness and restraint, and more of impulsive indignation, he might well have betrayed the cause of nationalism by failing to realize its future dependence upon an internationalism that must, on pain of ultimate collapse, include the peoples of Central Europe. There is nothing in the President's literary or political past to show that his motives are primarily "pacifist"; there is everything in that past to show a natural tendency to internationalism as the necessary outcome of the Liberal belief in the need of an orderly organization of society based on common consent. Nor is there any justification for supposing that he under-estimates the difficulties of a task which no conqueror or statesman of modern history has yet accomplished.

Again, it is the President's academic and somewhat cold intellectualism, his deficiency of "personality," which gives us hope. His judgment of possibilities has not been tricked by the sense of personal power or "man of destiny" theatricality. His attitude has never shown that quality, although it has often revealed relentless obstinacy, frequently in backing his own unsupported individual judgment. The result is a record of political "impossibilities." Had a political prophet in 1912 foretold that the President's policy with reference to Mexico, Panama tolls, the "Lusitania" tragedies (to say nothing of domestic matters) would be just what it has been; that he would overcome the raging hostility of the "interests" and the Hearst Press in the case of Panama and Mexico, and of Rooseveltism and deep national pride in the case of the German policy, and be re-elected on the record, not a political expert in the country would have believed such a prophet. Yet that outrageous political absurdity has happened. And because the Democratic Party is relieved from the need of attempting to "manage" Mr. Wilson for re-election, the President will have during the next four years an even greater freedom of action than in the past. These four years are an opportunity, unparalleled in modern history, not only for Mr. Wilson, but for Europe.

## A London Diary.

LONDON, FRIDAY.

THE Haig interviews have been virtually repudiated; Mr. Henderson has qualified his optimism; and we are bidden to look a long war in the face, which the terrific slaughter of the coming battles may shorten, but not end. There are, indeed, two kinds of forecast. One is that the lack of money all round must bring the war to a virtual end in the summer. The other is that the lack of money never stops war so long as financiers can inflate and degrade the currency, and prepare the future misery of the peoples, and that the war will proceed so long as the war spirit sustains it. Therefore let us not deceive ourselves. The boyhood of Europe is to be bled whiter than ever; the flame of hate and passion that consumes the nations will rise higher and higher. 1917 had a black dawn; it will have a darker night.

To what then do we tend? To a "broken-backed" war, waged by nations on crutches? I am afraid so. On both sides, the sharper issues seem barred. Our own fears are relieved. Germany is not likely to starve us out; even if she kept every neutral off the seas—and of this there is no likelihood—our three leading rations of sugar, bread, and meat could easily be maintained. But her own supplies seem likely to last just over the harvest; and then, failing a dramatic result for the coming battles in the West, both sides may plunge into a fourth winter's war. The moral ground is no less closed to peace. There was a prospect some weeks ago of a slow but visible approximation of the two chief combatants. That hope has disappeared. It rested to some degree on the belief that the party of the German Chancellor was in control, and that it was prepared to go as far as a definite pledge of withdrawal in the West, based, particularly, on the full restitution of Belgium. Two such German tenders have been described to me; both covering the evacuation of French and Belgian territory and even a partial settlement of the dispute over Alsace-Lorraine. I am now informed that they are without substance, and that we have as yet no reason to suppose that Germany would agree either (a) to withdrawal from France or (b) to the complete evacuation of Belgium, or her constitution after the war as an independent economic State. Therefore the battle proceeds under cover of a definite refusal on Germany's part to renounce and undo her worst act of sheer aggression. I make this statement, and await a correction by any organ of German Liberalism or Socialism that is able to refute it on authority, or even be inclined to dispute it.

I WRITE in blissful ignorance of what the Prime Minister is to say on imports, but I can faintly imagine what would have happened to his predecessor had Mr. Asquith announced the double postponement of a speech on such a subject. The cause of delay is not denied; it is the retribution waiting on the man who in his ardor to flee from the peril of Waiting and Seeing meets the fate of him who Leaps before he Looks. The difficulty of restricting imports is an old one. If I am not mistaken, the late Government encountered it when they proposed to stop the import of Spanish oranges. Well, Spanish oranges were not stopped, and for excellent reasons. Now the trouble is with French silk, by no means, as modern manufacture goes, an article of mere luxury. French revenues have been so curtailed by the occupation

that France is bound to resist any further restriction of them. Obviously, therefore, we have to settle with her as well as with our own people.

THE "Times" may spare itself the trouble of assuming the Free Traders' acceptance of Lord Balfour of Burleigh's report. It will be treated for what it is, a betrayal of the cause which won the battle of 1906. The Committee has small authority; it went beyond its reference; the Free Trade element was depleted by resignations and desertions; its leading idea will be riddled as was Mr. Chamberlain's, the moment Mr. George attempts to give it shape. What is sad to think of is the signature of two Labor members, one at least, Mr. Gosling, of some force and standing in Labor politics. Is not even the people's food safe in the hands of the men who were sent to Parliament to guard it? Examine, indeed, any ground of weakness in our democracy, and you come upon some incapacity of the Labor Party, as it is manned to-day, to stand the smallest test of steadfastness in thought or action. They yield to the lure of office; to a cry; to a threat; to a Press stampede. Take Mr. Henderson's speech in the House of Commons on the Means of Repudiating a Pledge, and add it to the scrap-heap to which the German Chancellor made the first handsome contribution when he tore the Belgian Treaty in twain. Dickens's "Mr. Gregsby" is the model of these politicians; and they do not suggest themselves as good guides for the country in all that it must do and bear before it is through its great adventure.

INDEED, I cannot do better than commend to all Ministers who contemplate breaking a pledge, evading a pledge, or "seeking to be relieved from" a pledge (the new style), the common form of Mr. Gregsby's famous letter to Mr. Pugstyles. Mr. Pugstyles, it will be remembered, had reproached Mr. Gregsby with having violated as a Member all the promises he had made to his constituents in the capacity of a candidate. Mr. Gregsby replied as follows:—

"MY DEAR MR. PUGSTYLES,—Next to the welfare of our beloved island—this great and free and happy country, whose powers and resources are, I sincerely believe, illimitable—I value that noble independence which is an Englishman's proudest boast, and which I fondly hope to bequeath to my children, untarnished and unsullied. Attracted by no personal motives, but moved only by high and great constitutional considerations; which I will not attempt to explain, for they are really beneath the comprehension of those who have not made themselves masters, as I have, of the intricate and arduous study of politics; I would rather keep my seat, and intend doing so.

"Will you do me the favor to present my compliments to the constituent body, and acquaint them with this circumstance?

"With great esteem,

"My dear Mr. Pugstyles,  
" &c., &c."

I NOTE a statement in the "Daily Mail" which fixes on Mr. McKenna the responsibility for the despatch of the expedition to Salonika. The motive of this monstrous suggestion is clear; and if every Cabinet Minister whom a newspaper desires to discredit for purposes of its own is to be held responsible for a policy he notoriously disliked and opposed, it is hard to see where the remedy lies. The Salonika expedition has, of course, been a terrible drain on our transport and our Exchequer, and it is idle to pretend that the Ministers to whom finance and transport were vital matters were its partisans. Is that seriously advanced? I think not. And there can be no doubt as to the source of the main



support of the Eastern school of strategy, to which (need I add?) our own soldiers were in steady opposition.

I AM much intrigued by the appearance of the new Sunday paper, the "National News." On the face of it the "News" is a weak understudy of the "Observer." But if I consent to plough the interminable sands of Mr. Garvin's rhetoric, I flatly decline any further agricultural operations in much more arid soil. Why then the "National News"? There is a famine of paper, and yet a miraculous draught of it would seem to have been fished out of the North Sea, so that the "National News" may be fed while the rest of the Press goes hungry. It cannot be that the "News" devotes itself to the praise of the Prime Minister and to no other discernible public purpose. Is not that end sufficiently compassed by the Northcliffe press, the "Morning Post," and the "Pall Mall Gazette"? One more voice in such a chorus hardly counts, unless the heavens themselves are bidden to be mute so that we may catch every note of the national Eisteddfod. Therefore, I am still puzzled to account for the "National News."

I HAD a pleasant illustration of the freedom with which the question of Australian conscription was discussed by the Australian troops at the front. Meetings were held and addressed not only by officers (who were mostly in favor of compulsory service), but by men (who more often opposed it). At one of these gatherings, composed of English and New Zealand troops as well as of Australians, a vote was taken, the anti-conscriptionists winning by five to one. Even this result was, I am assured, well below the average. Seven to one against would be nearer the mark.

I PROPOSED last week to send to the Front twenty copies of Mr. Godfrey Locker-Lampson's charming "Soldiers' Book of Love Poems." I shall be grateful if my readers will send me the means of despatching eighty more copies, 100 in all. The price of the book is half-a-crown. Its general quality is beyond praise.

A WAYFARER.

## Life and Letters.

### "ALL IN A GARDEN FAIR."

MR. REGINALD STEWART had early perceived that he was a marked man, and had welcomed the distinction without surprise. As a boy, he had often wondered what it would be like to meet a human being cleverer than himself, and had felt astonished at the indifference displayed by his schoolfellows when he easily surpassed them. At the University, he had maintained the promise of his boyhood by gaining his Firsts and being elected President of the Union, quite naturally. A careful perfection of appearance, combined with a detachment from the common passions of mankind, had won him the nickname of Narcissus. Coming to London, he had been called to the Bar, but only as a preliminary step to statesmanship. In further preparation for his high destiny, he meditated a year's travel to the Colonies and India; for he had early resolved to think Imperially, though never tempted to follow the advertisement's advice and drink Imperially too.

His design was frustrated or postponed by the outbreak of war, the purifying influence of which he at once foretold. Without hesitation, he applied for a

commission, but having received it, found himself specially retained for work in a Government office, for which his bearing and academic distinction obviously qualified him best. After two years' service, he had lately been appointed a member of the Secretariat whose special function it was to protect a powerful Chief from the interference of ordinary politicians, including Ministers and the heads of public departments. The Chief was thus saved from frivolous interruption in his pursuit of far-reaching designs, and gained in power, as Narcissus conjectured, by a mysterious aloofness, like Juggernaut hidden in a secret shrine into which no alien may gaze, or like that Shakespearian king who justly boasted:—

"By being seldom seen, I could not stir  
But, like a comet, I was wondered at."

To restrain the intrusion even of leaders among the common herd was not difficult, for Cabinet Ministers did not push where they were not wanted, and others who had grown old in the service of the State had learnt to appreciate the necessity of discipline. Had it not always been the chief duty of their own private secretaries to defend them from contact with the outside world, and from tedious applicants upon matters of life and death? But upon Narcissus was imposed the further duty of rapidly assimilating the popular ideas or tendencies of the day, and presenting them to his Chief, as it were, in concentrated pellets. In this task he derived much assistance from the dominating daily papers, which first created and then represented the ideas of the man in the street. It was a recognized principle in Government offices, as in the street, that all who did not see eye to eye with the dominating papers might safely be dismissed as cranks, or, in persistent cases, be denounced as advocates of violent and pacifist opinions, or even as "pro-Huns" (though Narcissus shivered at the hideousness of the word). For this part of his functions, Narcissus was obliged to get up at eight, and during breakfast to skim the headlines and leading articles of at least four morning papers, the manner and language of which perturbed him, in spite of a general agreement. But he went through with it gallantly, reflecting that thus alone he came in touch with the great heart of the people whom ultimately he was to serve by ruling.

To boil down the man in the street was one thing; to suggest great and original ideas upon which the Chief might possibly act was another, and such suggestion also came within the range of his duties. It was pleasanter, for it gave scope to his own political imagination, which his University career had shown to be unusually fervid. But it was more exhausting. God, as the poet said, does not send in the bill every week-end, and it is a hard task even for a distinguished graduate every morning to remould the world anew. With Narcissus, it was, as we noticed, a natural tendency to think Imperially, and he had plotted out the British Empire into watertight but closely connected compartments, consisting of the self-governing Dominions, the natives of India, who were partially capable of political thought, and the natives of Africa, whose childlike ignorance still required centuries of shepherding. All the Empire was to be bound together by Imperial taxation for defence and by Imperial tariffs for profit and self-support, so as to render it indifferent to rivalry, whether in arms or trade. As the result he beheld a vision of one happy breed of men extending round the world, bracing up the enervated Indian, inciting the African to industrial energy, propagating habits of cleanliness from pole to pole, taking up the black man's burden, and excluding as

by a Chinese Wall the intermixture or communication of inferior races who remain outside the British rule. "*Tu regere imperio*" was a line he often strengthened himself by repeating, and for the finest type of naturally Imperial ruler he had not to look far. Full of Imperial enthusiasm, he made a point of pausing before the large windows where the products of the Dominions stand temptingly displayed in sample. Though otherwise he might have taken comparatively small interest in bottled specimens of wheat, maize, oats, apples, and mineral wealth, or even in the background of stuffed emus, he forced himself to gaze at them every day upon the highest principles, and had grown quite familiar with the duck-billed platypus which crawled in front.

On Wednesday and Thursday the Committee's Report upon Imperial Preference had supplied him with just the kind of subject for the suggestion of great ideas which he preferred. But that was over, the Imperial Conference was still some way ahead, and to-day he felt himself, as he put it, gravelled for matter. Of course, there was the old cry of combing out. This week the popular Press had raised it again. "Comb Out the Funk Holes!" "Comb Out All Exemptions!" they had cried, but the cry had by now become monotonous as a forest of cuckoos, and no variation seemed left but "Comb Out Everybody!" Narcissus felt the mirror of his habitual self-complacency almost ruffled as he passed the statue of Charles I. and beheld the House of Parliament facing him at the other end of Whitehall. Not much time was left for ideas, but somehow the connection between the statue and Parliament suddenly bred one. "Comb Out the House!" What a placard that would make! The "Daily Flail" itself might envy it. There in that House lurked a body of men who, like the tresses of Hood's Unfortunate, had escaped from the comb. He knew many of them to be under sixty, but no one could say they were engaged upon work of national importance. The War Cabinet took care of that. Their occupation was gone.

They had far better join the Conscientious Objectors in ploughing up the Dartmoor heather. "Comb them All Out!" He pictured the six hundred, reasoning why and waiting reply, but none the less starting from Paddington. "Not a dog would bark at their going!" he cried aloud; for he felt like a Cromwell or Lord Northcliffe himself.

And to what noble uses for the salvation of the country the average Member of Parliament might be turned! Some could dig bracken roots for starch, or extract the starch from clean collars by boiling. Some might gather nettles for the fibre from which under-clothing could be woven. Some might collect acorns for the adulteration of coffee; or pig-nuts, which made good brain-food; or apple-parings to be boiled into jelly. He had heard of at least one Member of Parliament who could be trusted to tap cellars and convert the alcohol into motor spirit. The humblest could gather sunflowers for tobacco, moss for dressing wounds, and ants to be pounded into formaline. The more scientific could extract opium from lettuces for the use of army surgeons, sulphur for explosives from Harrogate water, phosphorus from putrefying fish, nitrates from the air, ozone from the atmosphere in the Tubes, sunshine from enormous radiometers, and electricity from the backs of a million cats. The sportsmen among them could be told off to shoot sparrows, rats, pheasants, and foxes, to bone rabbits so as to make fairer rations of them, to cut down all trees and woods, which would be mere waste upon the land without pheasants and foxes, and to melt pigs into glycerine so that at last they would fly as H.E. As to those whose education, like his own,

had been literary rather than scientific or sporting, they could easily release the fashionable palmists and astrologers of the day for active work at the front, or after three months' training by office-boys could take the place of many young writers upon the popular Press, without anyone noticing a difference in style. The fighting ranks and man-power of the country would thus be largely increased, and —

But just at that moment, as he turned up Downing Street, immaculate in appearance, self-complacently at peace with the world, Narcissus, in the abstraction of enthusiasm, stumbled against a lump of coal, and was on the point of falling right down into the gaping coal-cellar itself when he was caught by two enormous black arms.

"Upsy-daisy, my little feller!" cried the jolly coalheaver, to whose vast chest he was safely gripped. "Where are you a-shovin' to?"

Narcissus hurried into the house, and passed through into the garden beyond, where huts had been erected for the new-fashioned Secretariat. He was painfully conscious of a faultless uniform now disfigured by blackening hands and arms and body.

"Hullo, Narcissus! just back from the trenches?" asked one of his colleagues, looking up for a second.

It was not a sore point with Narcissus, but he deeply resented the tone.

#### WAR AND METAPHYSICS.

AFTER the exhaustive researches of Thomas De Quincey there remains nothing fresh to say on the connection between philosophy and murder. Pedantic minds have been found to question the scientific validity of his induction, but his learning is beyond dispute, and to this day there are probably thousands of readers who are satisfied to draw their whole knowledge of the philosophers from his plausible if unconvincing demonstration. He was content to prove the relation of philosophy to private murder. A further vista is opened up by an unexpected statement to be found in the columns of a German provincial newspaper. Is there also some mysterious connection between philosophy and wholesale murder, or, in other words, between metaphysics and war? We should not have ventured to assert it *à priori*, and it escaped the uncommon acumen of De Quincey. None the less the fact stands on record. It is to be found in a sketch of Berlin life in the "Frankfurter Zeitung." People in the capital, we are told, have become "quiet and introspective." The streets are deserted, and the cafés neglected. Even the gay world goes early to bed. Hostesses are "acquiring the habit of reciting poetry to their guests." At the head of this serious world, we are told at length, the "intellect" of Berlin is developing "a new interest in German metaphysics." This phenomenon, so far as we know, is peculiar to Berlin. We hear nothing from Paris of the renewed study of the Cartesian philosophy, nor is it the case that London is devoting its days to David Hume and its nights to Bishop Berkeley. That may come in time. The Germans have passed more rapidly and more violently than we have done through the successive stages of the fever of war. They hated much sooner than we did. Their longing for peace was general at an earlier date. The blockade forced upon them a regimen of "plain living." It is just possible that Lord Devonport may in time lead us also to the phase of "high thinking." But will it take the form of an interest in metaphysics?



That war, and even protracted war, is not unfavorable to the study of philosophy is a proposition which might be plausibly defended. Certainly the creative period of German metaphysics was the period of the revolutionary and Napoleonic wars. Kant, to be sure, had laid the basis of his system before these wars began. But in the remote solitude of Königsberg he was profoundly moved by the furies of the outer world. He was the hot partisan, first, of the American revolt, and then of the French Revolution. War did not interrupt his speculations, and the third of the critiques appeared when all Europe was at war. His treatise on "Perpetual Peace" was a commentary on a state of war that must have seemed to contemporaries unending. Fichte attained his leadership while Berlin was under a French governor, and his lectures were delivered to an obligato of Napoleonic drums. Hegel's case is notorious, and Archimedes himself gave no sublimer instance of detachment. Fate timed the battle of Jena for the moment when Hegel was completing the "Phenomenology of Spirit," and he finished it calmly, to the thunder of the guns, while the armies of Prussia were destroyed under his study-windows. It was only with the restoration of peace that Hegelianism became a sort of official Prussian philosophy, but throughout the war of liberation the "intellect" of Berlin devoted itself, as it had never done before, to metaphysics.

There are, indeed, critics who profess to detect the strand of militarism in the whole tangled web of German metaphysics. For them Kant's categories labor across the page with a stilted goose step, and the Prussian drill-sergeant presides over the complicated evolutions of Hegel's Logic. That is the kind of discovery which is always made in war-time. We have sometimes wondered whether the Persians blamed Socrates when Xenophon led the Ten Thousand on their notorious raid, and recalled to the discredit of Greek philosophy that Aristotle had been Alexander's tutor. A century ago it was in French philosophy that our fathers professed to see the origin of Europe's calamities. Did not Burke declare that in the groves of their academy "at the end of every vista you see nothing but the gallows"? In the same spirit our own war-time critics will trace the present war to Hegel. We can imagine that Professor Santayana, for example, will smile grimly when he reads that Berlin is relieving its anxiety over the progress of the submarine campaign by the study of German metaphysics. For our part we have noticed that the draught which each man draws from the deep well of German philosophy depends very much on the bucket which he lowers into it. Hegel is accused of inspiring the Prussian State-system. It is also beyond dispute that he formed the mind and inspired the method of Karl Marx. Clausewitz was an ardent student of Kant, but the master wrote "Perpetual Peace." It is perfectly true that some of the more learned Slavophiles and the philosophers of the Russian reaction were influenced by Hegelianism, but so also was Herzen, the first prophet of Nihilism. The greatest of living English philosophers has defined metaphysics as "the finding of bad reasons for what we believe upon instinct." If men whose self-interest seems to prompt them to the violent use of force have sometimes sought a justification in philosophy, it was instinct which led them to search for involved reasons. Philosophy was not the prime corrupter.

It is possible that peace, freedom, and democracy are not the conditions most favorable to metaphysical thought. When the will is unfettered, and the thinker moves in a world alive to the sense that it can guide and determine its own activities, it must be an austere mind

which occupies itself wholly with speculations on knowledge and reality, appearance and the Absolute. It may be that the startling difference in manner and spirit and method between German and English philosophy may depend, in the last resort, not upon any racial difference, but in part upon the political conditions of the two societies. English speculation, especially in the period from Bentham to Mill, was a kind of prolegomena to the problems of social reform. If the Utilitarians laid a foundation of psychology, logic, and ethics, it was only that they might build more securely their fabric of a Liberal and progressive society. The stimulus which moved them to write was the knowledge that their guidance was welcomed by a numerous and ardent school of practical men who wished to have for their social and political reforms a sound theoretical basis. Their distaste for pure metaphysics was something more than a deduction from the premises of the associationist psychology: it sprang from the tendency to regard philosophy primarily as a direct guide to practical life. Practical life in that context meant the free social movement of a community which held its own destinies in its hands. Locke's school had turned as naturally to political speculation as the Cartesians turned to physics. Each reflected the spirit of its own society. The English schools were anti-metaphysical largely because they were impatient to bring their speculations to bear at once upon a world which freely ordered its own life. The Cartesians wrote under an apparently unshakable despotism. It was not merely the fear of persecution which limited their practical thinking: they wrote for a world which did not ask for practical guidance, for the simple reason that it would not have been free to follow it.

We can imagine that if this war were to lengthen out to Napoleonic proportions, if we were to face the possibility that for twenty years to come, all change, all progress, all conscious effort to adapt our environment to our ideals must fatally be postponed, speculation would turn back to the research of ultimate realities. We should live as the Greeks lived under the Roman Empire, with paralyzed wills; we should find our escape, as they did, by one of the familiar roads of an other-worldly idealism, a ruthless scepticism, or a stoic dogmatism. There doubtless would be, as there was under the Empire, an intense revival of religion, and a wistful exploration of all the wayward paths of superstition. War and despotism must in the long run work the same result upon the speculative temper. Each must depress the sense that human progress can be shaped by human hands; each must foster the belief in destiny. War on the small scale, a war of movement led by adventurous captains, might enhance the human pride in will. But war on the modern scale, a war of whole nations waged by machinery on rigid lines, cannot enhance the sense of personality. A philosopher reared in that environment might speculate on destiny and the Absolute. He might learn to see life *sub specie aeternitatis*, but he would not readily repeat the formulae of an optimistic rationalism. We question if his interest would turn at all to human life, and its problems of adjustment. Rather he would seek relief in a super-sensuous reality, and endeavor to escape from the Cave of phenomena—he would call it a dug-out—to the abiding world of ideas. That generation might recover its belief in God, Immortality, and the soul, but it would smile when the text-books told it that wise men had dreamed of realizing on this earth the greatest happiness of the greatest number.

## Letters from the Dominions.

### THE LIBERAL REVIVAL IN CANADA.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—These are dark days for Liberalism and liberty in the Motherland, and perhaps it may bring cheer and comfort to drooping hearts to read of a Liberal revival in some part of the British Commonwealth. Canada is the scene, and the signs are manifold.

Never has the tide of Liberal political success flowed so strongly. Out of the nine Canadian provincial legislatures, only Ontario and the two smallest remain true to Conservatism, and Mr. Rogers, the Tory "Minister of Elections," is well aware what a handicap this state of affairs constitutes. The Borden Government has the scantiest hope of re-election; already the thanes, who in Canada take the form of contractors, are flying and turning King's evidence in graft cases against ex-Ministers, the financial Mandarins are critical and disgusted with the administrative incompetence everywhere visible; Sir Sam Hughes, the Canadian Kitchener of the "Morning Post," has been bundled out by his exasperated colleagues, and there are others who must soon follow. One seems to see them, as Mr. H. G. Wells would say, spending a leisured old-age in California telling what and whom they did in the Great War.

Sir Robert Borden is the least inspiring of statesmen, a compost of Spencer Perceval and Mr. W. H. Smith; if the most virtuous, he is also the dullest of his Cabinet, and a new country likes variety even in its politics. If the Laurier Government was corrupt, it amused people and did things—Sir Robert Borden's Government is more corrupt, and disgusts men with its dull and incompetent lethargy. It is to-day perishing of a complication of diseases—Mr. Chase Casgrain, who was always highly respected as an honest politician, and the only representative of the old "Bleu" conservatism of Quebec, has just died—an irreparable loss—the chief Whip has resigned, another Minister is deeply involved in a graft inquiry; Sir Sam Hughes is plotting revengeful disclosures, and a group of the foremost magnates of the financial world are openly working for a national business Government. Reports from Ottawa tell of poor Sir Robert moving like some decrepit Oriental Sultan amid traitorous servants and rapacious partisans in an atmosphere of clouded counsels and despairful compromises. To succeed Mr. Casgrain as a Quebec representative in the Cabinet, he has chosen Mr. Sevigny, who, thanks to many eloquent *exposés* of the evils of British Imperialism and the inadvisability of a Canadian Navy, was elected with others in 1911 as a supporter of Mr. Bourassa. Subsequently, the sweets of office, in his case the Speakership, induced most of these Nationalists to desert their principles, but their utterances remain; and the Liberals, exasperated at the shameless cynicism of the "loyalist" party in its choice of a new Minister, have decided to end the Federal truce and oppose his re-election. Mr. Bourassa, who helped Mr. Borden to office in 1911, and was then discarded as "disloyal and dangerous," is out in full cry after his faithless allies, and Quebec offers the poorest of fields for the activities of Tory candidates. The "strong, silent Nova Scotian" has tried to please everybody, and has pleased nobody. The Ontario cities, always strongly Imperialist, dislike his careless and wasteful administration of the war effort, his refusal to adopt conscription, and his clinging to the pseudo-Nationalists. The West is irreconcilably hostile to his high tariff proclivities and excessive tenderness for the Eastern privileged interests. Labor is alarmed at the threat of industrial conscription contained in the new "National Service" registration, which others regard as a sheer waste of paper and money. The West wants conscription, both of wealth and men, and Quebec wants neither. The numerous Germans and Austrians (Kitchener, Ontario, *née* Berlin, was the scene of riots lately) will vote against him, because he has interned some of their number, and the super-patriots because he has not interned them all. No change of policy can bring him votes—one sectional

grievance can only be appeased at the risk of creating another. The country in general is enraged at the blind partisan favoritism and patronage jobbery which have disfigured and partially nullified its military preparations, and will visit no disapproval upon the Liberals if they refuse a further extension of the life of Parliament, and insist upon an election this summer.

Yet it has come about that the head of this discredited administration crosses the Atlantic in February, and is to sit at the council board of the Commonwealth as the tame cat of Lord Milner. It requires some effort to imagine Sir Robert Borden making any original contribution to the higher strategy of the war—he can, however, be trusted to say ditto to the new Directorate, save that he is cautious enough not to undertake the enforcement of their schemes in Canada. But if he were wise, he would not attempt to pose as the representative leader of the Canadian people until he has obtained their verdict at the polls on his administration. In all probability he may return to meet the same reception as that other Imperialist idol, Mr. Hughes. But he will not, it is safe to say, have "electrified and galvanized" any British audiences, nor will he ever find "a niche in the temple of British Imperialism beside Chamberlain and Macdonald."

Unless the portents deceive, Sir Wilfrid Laurier will be Premier of Canada once again. His support will come mainly from Nationalist Quebec and the Radical West, and the ideas of the two sections may not always coincide. But there lie before him unequalled opportunities to serve true Liberal purposes, and the problem is whether he will use them to leave a new legacy of real Liberal tradition or sink into senile Palmerstonian Whiggery. Quebec and the West will agree on constitutional questions, but it is doubtful whether the Conservative Catholic influences of the French provinces will see eye to eye on social and economic issues with the new Western Liberalism, which has lately translated itself into a series of advanced Radical measures; before this year closes, prohibition and woman's suffrage will be in operation from the Great Lakes to the Pacific; the Referendum will be part of the constitution of three out of four Western provinces, and in all the banking and mortgage monopoly will have been broken by rural credit systems. The best insurance for the Western Radicals against the possible apathy of their Eastern allies is a separate wing, such as Cobden and Bright led in the Mid-Victorian era in Britain, and towards this they are steadily moving: its creation will force a much-needed realignment of parties which will correspond to political needs and principles. There may as a result be sectional politics for a time, but there will be an end of the quasi-Prussian domination of Ontario. There must be no repetition of the backslidings of 1896 onwards, but Canadian Liberals can afford certain compromises on domestic issues to secure for their country the guidance of a statesman who has a clear grasp of constitutional problems and Imperial relations, and holds enlightened and Liberal views thereon. The Premier of Canada is chosen to please the Canadian people, and not the "Morning Post" or the "Round Table," and on his success in the former task does his fate depend. For good or evil, Canada is cosmopolitan in her national structure: there are three million people within her bounds who do not habitually speak the English tongue. Even of the Anglo-Saxons, the predominant element is the Presbyterian Scottish, who are mostly Liberals and little enamored of "made-in-London" Imperialism. The old national policies and aggressive diplomacies available for homogeneous European units are not for her; her instincts and interests all lie with a League of Peace, beside which Imperial Federation is a poor patchwork project, though a loose Imperial Council may have its advantages. It has been Sir Wilfrid Laurier's lot to meet the bitterest attacks for his greatest services, which were the steady checkmating of the pretensions of the Quebec hierarchy and his wise direction of British Imperialism. Once again his unique capacities are sadly needed, and never was there a greater field of service available for a Liberal Premier of Canada. He has supported the war from the first, though his recruiting efforts in Quebec



have been nullified by bigots and partisans, who desired to make his return to power impossible through the unpopularity of his race with the rest of Canada. But the average Canadian is now prepared to regard the incompetence and stupidity of the Borden Government as a worse form of treachery to the British Commonwealth than Colonial nationalism. No man can re-consolidate a badly divided Canada so thoroughly and represent her real views at an Imperial Conference so effectually as this great French-Canadian Liberal, and his presence there may well serve to give British Liberalism a much-needed respite from the worst designs of its domestic foes.—Yours, &c.,

HESPERICUS.

## Letters to the Editor.

### THE FUTURE OF PALESTINE.

To the Editor of *THE NATION*.

SIR,—Why should we regret, as you did last week, that a section of the Zionist movement should wish Palestine to become a British Dominion? It seems to me one of the greatest compliments ever paid to this country and to its liberal traditions, for this prejudice (if you will) in favor of the British allegiance is not confined to the Jews of this country but, before the war at any rate, was shared by Jews all over the world, including Germany.

They want to be a British Dominion, not because the British are cleverer or handsomer than other people, but simply because only the British Empire has the secret of combining full development of the individual nationalities composing it with unity before the outside world. In no other empire would Jewish nationality have a chance. Under France, Jerusalem and the Jewish towns would become little Paris, just as Antioch sprang up everywhere under the rule of the Seleucids.

Germany has never shown the will or the ability to tolerate another Kultur than her own within her political sphere, while Russia has dismally failed with the Jews. The preference, therefore, for the British allegiance is rational and shows the keenest appreciation of the distinctive greatness of England's contribution to the art of government. Why reject so subtle a compliment?

Sometimes no doubt it is necessary to decline the crown, even though it be of flowers; but it is a difficult thing to do so gracefully, as you seem to have found. For you say that the more natural plan would be a neutral Palestine under international guarantees. Well, it may come to that, and if English Jews proposed it one would have nothing more to say. But, in satisfying the claims of nationality, we should always, as far as possible, do as we would be done by. Should we like to be under international guarantees? I think not. No one knows what these guarantees would be worth, and is it not rather like trying the physic on the dog to prescribe it to the Jews? But, guarantees or no, there will have to be a policeman, and the Jews prefer a British policeman.

But, we are told, the work of the policeman will be too onerous. Palestine is off his beat, which lies along the Suez Canal; the Sinai desert is a good enough barrier. The awkward fact is that this desert, or most of it, is already part of Egypt, and it seems a poor way of treating Egyptian subjects in Sinai if we are to post back to the Canal every time danger threatens. This desert frontier has, in fact, not proved a barrier in this war. Circumstances were exceptionally favorable to us. The Turks came into the war against us in a fit of absent-mindedness; their preparations were wholly inadequate, and they were destitute of industrial resources of their own. Yet, until last month, all the fighting that has taken place has been on the Egyptian soil. In another war all these conditions will be changed to our detriment. Judea will have become a great place of arms and immense stocks of railway material accumulated for bridging the desert. The Canal will then be the battle front in a real attack. You can do anything with bayonets but sit on them, and whatever use the Canal may be as No-Man's Land between the invading and defending army, it

will be no good as a canal. If Germany or a German Turkey retain possession of Palestine, the Egyptian frontier will become the most important in the whole empire.

This is the danger that we have to face whether we like it or not, and in military, as in other matters, the bold and drastic solution is the easiest and best. We must have a projecting bastion in front of a line of communication so vital as that of the Canal, and the alternatives are a system of Imperial defence of Egypt, of which the whole burden will have to be borne by ourselves alone, and a system under which we create a new industrious and patriotic nation to redress the disturbed balance of the old system and to help us to carry the fresh burdens of our position in the East after the war. Let us beware of repeating the mistake of the mid-nineteenth century politicians who regarded every fresh extension of territory as an increase of responsibility that ought to be avoided. Quite a different standard of judgment has to be applied to increases in the family and increases in the rest of the establishment. The Dominions, as this war has proved, have brought no fresh responsibility but greatly increased strength; so it will be in the future of the British Dominion of Palestine. And this increase of strength will not be direct only, but indirect, by reason of the headship of Jewry that Jerusalem, as a city of the British Empire, would confer upon us.

You say that north of the Sinai desert there is not another frontier as good to be found until we reach the gates of Cilicia. And yet one seems to have heard of the *entering in of Hamath*, of the Gorge of Laish (Banias), which the men of Dan seized, of the strong places of Samaria, of the Shephelah, commanding the maritime plain, and of the great plateau of Judea, which is a huge natural fortification. In the possession of a high-spirited and patriotic people backed by the might of Great Britain, and, if you like, under international guarantees, too, Palestine might easily be made impregnable.

You would not apparently insist on any change in this part of the world if insistence meant the prolongation of the war. It is a hard saying. That would be to end the war without removing the cancer that caused it. I mean the Ottoman Empire. For without change, and with Palestine in the hands of an enemy, our tenure of Egypt would be on sufferance, as the events of this war have proved. Egypt would be the Achilles heel in our system of Imperial defence, and its possession would sooner or later force us to adopt conscription as a permanent institution. Besides, Palestine as a frontier Turkish province would become another Armenia. The alternatives are between the complete obliteration of the Jewish colonizing work by massacre after the Armenian fashion, and a complete resurrection of the Jewish State.

And why, oh why, if extension of our rule to Southern Syria would be such a bad thing for this country, are you so ready to encourage France to take Northern Syria? And if French sentiment with regard to Northern Syria is to be respected, has not British sentiment with regard to Southern Syria an equal claim?

Shades of Shaftesbury, of Oliphant, of Gawlor, of George Eliot, of Holman Hunt, and all the other famous Englishmen who pleaded for the restoration of the Jewish State in Palestine, some of them under the authority of the British Crown!—Yours, etc.,

H. SIDEBOTHAM.

[We were not aware that the Zionist movement as a whole (including the German Jews) had expressed a preference for a British Palestine over a national Jewish State. Has the Zionist Congress ever expressed this view? Seriously, we hardly think that Mr. Sidebotham intends to convey so much.]

We oppose a British annexation of Palestine, primarily, because it could not stand alone. It could only be an item of a comprehensive plan for the total dismemberment of Asiatic Turkey, and that in its turn means the prolongation of the war for purposes of pure conquest. Further, if the country were ours to dispose of, we should beware of exciting French hostility by taking it for ourselves, and should urge its internationalization (as a Jewish State) as a middle term.

The military history of Palestine surely suggests that it could always with ease be invaded from the north.

Sinai is inhabited only by nomads, who do not want our

protection. With permanent lines ten or twenty miles from the Canal, its use as a waterway can be secured.—EDITOR, THE NATION.]

#### TCHECHO-SLOVAKS AND JUGOSLAVS.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—In your article of January 27th, entitled "The Tchecho-Slovaks," you touch also upon the Yugoslav problem.

I have read the correspondence in defence of the Tchecho-Slovak unity, and feel obliged to say a few words about the Yugoslav problem.

You take it for a fact that the Yugoslav problem presents a striking contrast. "The Croats are struggling for their autonomy against the Magyar infringements, the Slovenes and the Dalmatians belong to Austria, whilst Bosnia and Herzegovina, including an uneasy mixture of Catholic Croats with Orthodox and Moslem Serbs, present another distinct problem."

Let me first of all impress upon your readers that the Serbo-Croato-Slovenes, whichever religion they may profess, are only one nation, with absolutely identical ideals. Therefore in this war they cannot present different problems, but only one—and that is one of liberation. "The uneasy mixture" in Bosnia-Herzegovina is, in reality, a very easy one, for the simple reason that the Yugoslavs are one of the most tolerant races of the world. For a nation that could create the proverb, "Brother is dear, whichever religion he may profess," must be perfectly and absolutely tolerant. If there have been religious controversies, they have never been bitter, and were in every case due to foreign influences.

As for the desire of the Croats to be united with their brothers in Serbia, the facts speak for themselves. Austrian prisons are full of Croats persecuted for High Treason. The Opposition in the Croatian Diet refused to send delegates to the Coronation of King Charles Habsburg. Croatian colonies in America and elsewhere, numbering about one and a-half million people, are unanimously for the Union, and this is the case everywhere where the Croats and the Yugoslavs from Austria in general have had an opportunity of expressing their own ideals without fear of persecution and imprisonment. These colonies finance "the exiles," who are unjustly compared with Roger Casement, because they have been in their country the leaders of the nation, and in exile have the support of the Yugoslav colonies, while Roger Casement certainly did not have the support of his own nation to such an extent.

The question of the capital is of no importance whatever. When there is an ardent desire for unity, it does not matter whether the capital of the nation will be Belgrade, or Zagreb, Sarajevo, Zadar, or Ljubljana.

Your contributor solves the problem in a most amazing manner. He proposes an autonomous Illyria—evidently under the Emperor of Austria—but does not say whether the kingdoms of Serbia and Montenegro are to be included in this new State. If this is so, I am certain the Kaiser would be very pleased, as the Pan-Germanic plans in the Balkans and the Near East would thus be realized, and Mitteleuropa would be an accomplished fact, for a subject, though autonomous, State, under the economic and political pressure would certainly become a tool in the hands of the Pan-Germans. There is no reason for making illusions about Austria. Austria has been, and will remain, a Germanic Power, and even if she wanted to, she could not possibly renounce her tradition and her history.

If it is not so—i.e., if Serbia and Montenegro are not to be included in Illyria—then Illyria, I suppose, would be constituted by the Yugoslav provinces now under the Austro-Magyar yoke—and so, against every principle of justice and nationality, the Serbian nation would be again divided into two factions, one free, the other only partially free. Doubtless this state of affairs would create further controversies, conflicts, and wars, all to the discredit of justice and humanity. This certainly cannot be the aim of the Allies in this terrible war.

Your correspondent, writing about the Magyars, rightly says they are not to be trusted, but I take the liberty of reminding him that the Austrian Germans are not to be trusted either; wholesale hangings and imprisonments in

Bosnia, Dalmatia, Trieste, and other provinces speak for themselves.

Let every nation govern its own destiny, and then we shall be much nearer to the great ideal of brotherhood amongst men of all races and creeds, to the benefit of each nation separately and humanity as a whole.—Yours, &c.,

PAVLE OSTOVIC.

5, Gower Street, W.C. February 14th, 1917.

[We proposed, and have always strongly insisted, that the Kingdom of Serbia should retain its full independence. We are not satisfied that the real wishes of the Croats can be known or ascertained during war.—Ed., THE NATION.]

#### THE SUFFERING IN SYRIA AND PALESTINE.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—I was pleased to see a reference in a recent number of THE NATION to the fund which has been established for the relief of sufferers in Syria and Palestine. The inaugural meeting of the fund was held at the Mansion House yesterday, when Lord Bryce and others laid before a large audience the deplorable condition of the peoples suffering under Turkish misrule at the present time. As Chairman of the Executive Committee I should be glad if you would allow me to call further attention to the fund. The task of raising money for such a purpose at the present time is no light one. Many patriotic and relief funds have claimed the attention of the public; and there is the added difficulty, in our case, of having only a scant knowledge of conditions, and of being unable, at the moment, to apply relief. It is essential, however, that supplies should be ready to be used as soon as ever access to the Holy Land can once more be obtained. Such supplies are being stored in Egypt, and will be available at short notice when opportunity offers. The fund will be used not only for giving immediate relief, but for re-establishing the people in their homes and on the land. It is estimated that, at the very least, £50,000 will be required, and gifts of money and clothing, and offers of personal service, will be thankfully received by the Hon. Secretary, Church House, Westminster, S.W.—Yours, &c.,

HENRY T. HODGKIN.

February 21st, 1917.

[We are obliged to hold over a number of letters till next week.—Ed., THE NATION.]

#### Poetry.

##### QUOS ÆQUUS AMAVIT.

NINE days he scudded o'er the lonely deep  
By ruinous winds driv'n from his homeward way,  
The undaunted soul that never let the mind  
Slumber nor spared the hand, and on the tenth  
Drave on a peaceful beach, and found a folk  
Plucking the careless herb and so content.  
Day after day sped for them indistinct,  
Deedless, with love and hate alike unknown,  
An apathetic, undisturbing dream.  
And when upon the languor of the soul  
That never flash'd to any generous thought,  
There came the touch that none may disobey,  
Faintly they faded out from fruitless life,  
And as they were what time they saw the sun,  
Such they remain on the sad, sunless shore,  
Shadows above, shadows in the underworld.

Ye did not live, ye have not perish'd, so;  
For that in-working and all-working power  
Which did in peace what peace desir'd, and when  
Ate let loose her monsters turn'd aside  
Lightly to fiercer peril, sorer toil,  
And laugh'd amid the thunders, that your power,  
Godlike albeit the sinew slack in death,  
Fades not nor leaves the sunlight.

See, the babe

Smiles in the widow's arms. Your power is his.

JOHN SARGEANT.



## The World of Books

THE "NATION" OFFICE, THURSDAY NIGHT.

THE following is our weekly selection of books which we commend to the notice of our readers:—

- "Shelley in England: New Facts and Letters from the Shelley-Whitton Papers." By Roger Ingpen. (Kegan Paul. 15s. net.)
- "Ibant Obscuri: An Experiment in the Classical Hexameter." By Robert Bridges. (Clarendon Press. 12s. 6d. net.)
- "The Study and Criticism of Italian Art (Third Series)." By Bernhard Berenson. (Bell. 10s. 6d. net.)
- "Argentina and Uruguay." By Gordon Ross. (Methuen, 10s. 6d. net.)
- "The Eternal Husband and other Stories." By Fyodor Dostoevsky. Translated by Constance Garnett. (Heinemann. 4s. 6d. net.)
- "Day and Night Stories." By Algernon Blackwood. (Cassell. 6s.)

\* \* \*

WHEN a humorist turns from the practice to the theory of his subject, it is ten to one that he will lose most of his accustomed liveliness. This is certainly the case with Mr. Stephen Leacock, who is a humorist by vocation, though his avocation has made him a college professor. There may be humor in a professional disquisition on humor—Professor Freud has proved it—but it is apt to be of the unconscious sort, at least so far as the professor is concerned. Professor Leacock, it is true, has some excuse for his excursion into theory. He discovered that a critic had described his humor as nothing more than "a rather ingenious mixture of hyperbole and myosis." This could hardly fail to draw a reply from a humorist who is also a professor, and it has led Professor Leacock, in his latest book, "Further Foolishness," into a dissertation disguised as a defence. And the worst of it is that the dissertation is needless and the defence inadequate. For the theory of humor is a serious subject, and Professor Leacock has failed to enliven it. "The world's humor," he says, with some truth, "in its best and greatest sense, is perhaps the highest product of our civilization." He has in mind, not the humor of daily life, but humor as expressed in literature, for he advances the claim that "Mark Twain's 'Huckleberry Finn' is a greater work than Kant's 'Critique of Pure Reason,' and Charles Dickens's creation of Mr. Pickwick did more for the elevation of the human race—I say it in all seriousness—than Cardinal Newman's 'Lead, Kindly Light.' Newman cried out for light in the gloom of a sad world. Dickens gave it."

\* \* \*

CONSIDERING the present state of world politics, it was a little tactless of Professor Leacock to pit an American against a German, and we are not compelled to decide between the merits of Kant and Mark Twain. I shall only say "in all seriousness" that I see no advantage in comparing writers that cannot be compared. But I join issue with Professor Leacock when, in asserting that most people underestimate the difficulty of "making humor," he adds: "It would never occur to them that the thing is hard, meritorious, and dignified." To say that it is melancholy, pernicious, and impossible, would, I think, be nearer the truth, for, of all products of the human intellect, "made humor" is the most depressing. Humor, unlike wisdom, layeth not hold of them that seek it. Since Hierocles, in the early years of the Christian era, produced the first jest-book, every volume of the sort has been something of an outlaw in the world of books. To prepare jokes with deliberation and forethought is a blunder as well as a crime. One of the first laws of humor—following a professor one is bound to lay down laws—is that it is never overtaken when chased, and there is good reason why Joe Miller's masterpieces should be excluded from every library. If the futility of the professional pursuit of humor were once fully realized, one of the gloomiest and most nefarious of industries would be banished from the world. A definite promise of humor is one of the most difficult to perform. This is one of the reasons why people laugh so rarely at anything in the comic papers. Another is that those papers so seldom contain a joke.

\* \* \*

PROFESSED humorists have added largely to the population of the world of books. They began in the sixteenth

century with the "Gothamite Tales" of Dr. Borde, an otherwise estimable physician, and were continued in such collections as "The Merry Tales and Witty Shifts of Scoggin," "Merry Tales and Quick Answers," Taylor's "Wit and Mirth," "The Jests of Hugh Peters," and Chamberlain's "Conceits, Clinches, Flashes, and Whimsies," all amazingly pointless to-day, and valued only by collectors of "top-shelf literature." Towards the end of the seventeenth century there came into existence a strange underworld of letters, men of scholarship as well as scurrility, who wrote the jest-books of the day, and filled them with a procession of jokes as broad as they are long. If these books are read to-day, it is for the information they give about social conditions, and not for their humor. Agile and daring as their writers were, the humor has evaporated from their travesties, just as it has from the comic Histories of England and other works of the same type that are now such dreary reading. Even writers of a very different class, and much closer to us in time, like Calverley and Lear, are now beginning to wear thin, and few people would smile to-day at the broadest of George Colman's "Broad Grins." In humor, more than in most things, what is one generation's mirth is another generation's boredom, and the best jokes, like the best speeches, perish in the using. A joke is at first received with extravagant demonstrations. But if, encouraged by this hospitality, it keeps returning again and again, it soon discovers that it has worn out its welcome.

\* \* \*

It may be objected that I have been confusing wit with humor, and that one should always start with a definition. I would refer those who wish to differentiate between wit and humor to Hazlitt's essay on the subject, one of the least tedious of the many attempts to distinguish between them. And I will not be betrayed into any effort to define humor. But I will quote a sentence from Mr. McChord Crothers, an American humorist, which seems to me to get very close to a definition. "If life depends on the perpetual adjustment of the organism to its environment," he says, "humor is the means by which the intellectual life is sustained on those occasions when the expected environment is not there." How humor is defined matters less than how people behave towards it. And in at least one respect I am inclined to believe that most people make a great mistake. They are so unanimous in regarding lack of a sense of humor as a fatal defect that, as Professor Leacock says, "any man will admit, if need be, that his sight is not good, or that he cannot swim, or shoots badly with a rifle, but to touch upon his sense of humor is to give him a mortal affront." A man who is rather proud of having no ear for music considers any doubt about his sense of humor as a personal attack. The consequence is that people whom nature meant to be solemn from the cradle to the grave are forced to live deceitful lives by pretending that they shared this prized possession.

\* \* \*

ALMOST every modern writer about humor—Professor Leacock is an exception—laments its present decline and fall. The late H. D. Traill ended an essay on "The Future of Humor" by saying that we are within measurable distance of a time when nobody will be outwardly amused by the humor of anybody else, and he described the last humorist enjoying the great Cosmic Joke in strict privacy amid many millions of earnest young men who could not see it. And Andrew Lang held the theory that humor went out with cruelty. According to him, fifty years ago we were a cruel but also a humorous people. We had George Cruikshank, and Gillray, and Leech, and Surtees. Dickens's Pickwickians were reared on the beef and beer of the naughty, badger-baiting, cock-fighting old England which we have now improved out of existence. But this is mere old fogydom. Nobody should imagine that because he has lost his zest for humor there will be no more cakes and ale. Samuel Butler thought it would be a frightful thing if true humor were more common, or rather more easy to see, for it would, he believed, prevent anybody from attempting anything. Yet he held that a sense of humor is one of the safeguards of virtue. "A sense of humor," he wrote, "keen enough to show a man his own absurdities as well as those of other people, will keep him from the commission of all sins, or nearly all, save those that are worth committing."

PENGUIN.

## Reviews.

JAMES JOYCE.

"A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man." By JAMES JOYCE. ("The Egoist," 6s.)

AN eminent novelist was asked recently by some troublesome newspaper what he thought of the literature of 1916. He answered publicly and loudly that he had heard of no literature in 1916; for his own part, he had been reading "science." This was kind neither to our literary nor our scientific activities. It was not intelligent to make an opposition between literature and science. It is no more legitimate than to oppose literature and "classics," or literature and history, and as a matter of fact there were some admirable pieces of scientific literature published last year, Professor Wood Jones's "Arboreal Man," for example. Good writing about the actualities of the war too has been abundant; that was only to be expected; it is an ungracious thing in the home critic to sit at a confused feast and bewail its poverty when he ought to be sorting out his discoveries. Criticism may analyze, it may appraise and attack, but when it comes to the mere grumbling of veterans no longer capable of novel perceptions, away with it! There is indeed small justification for grumbling at the writing of the present time. Quite apart from the books and stories about the war, a brilliant literature in itself, from that artless assured immortal, Arthur Green ("The Story of a Prisoner of War"), up to Mr. Philip Gibbs and the already active historians, there is a great amount of fresh and experimental writing that cannot be ignored by anyone still alive to literary interests. There are, for instance, Miss Richardson's ("Pointed Roofs" and "Backwater") amusing experiments in writing as the Futurists paint, and Mr. Caradoc Evans's invention (in "My People" and "Capel Sion") of a new method of grimness, a pseudo-Welsh idiom that is in its grotesque force as pleasing to the intelligent story-reader as it must be maddening to every sensitive Welsh patriot. Nor have I seen anywhere anything like adequate praise for the romantic force and beauty of Mr. Thomas Burke's "Limehouse Nights." In the easier 'nineties, when Henley was alive and discovering was in fashion, that book would have made a very big reputation indeed. Even more considerable is "A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man," by James Joyce, published rather obscurely by "The Egoist," Ltd., because nobody else will issue it on this side of the Atlantic. It is a book to buy and read and lock up, but it is not a book to miss. Its claim to be literature is as good as the claim of the last book of "Gulliver's Travels."

It is no good trying to minimize a characteristic that seems to be deliberately obtruded. Like Swift and another living Irish writer, Mr. Joyce has a cloacal obsession. He would bring back into the general picture of life aspects which modern drainage and modern decorum have taken out of ordinary intercourse and conversation. Coarse, unfamiliar words are scattered about the book, unpleasantly, and it may seem to many, needlessly. If the reader is squeamish upon these matters, then there is nothing for it but to shun this book, but if he will pick his way, as one has to do at times on the outskirts of some picturesque Italian village with a view and a church and all sorts of things of that sort to reward one, then it is quite worth while. And even upon this unsavory aspect of Swift and himself, Mr. Joyce is suddenly illuminating. He tells at several points how his hero Stephen is swayed and shocked and disgusted by harsh and loud sounds, and how he is stirred to intense emotion by music and the rhythms of beautiful words. But no sort of smell affects him like that. He finds olfactory sensations interesting or aesthetically displeasing, but they do not make him sick or excited, as sounds do. This is a quite understandable turn-over from the more normal state of affairs. Long ago I remember pointing out in a review the difference in the sensory basis of the stories of Robert Louis Stevenson and Sir J. M. Barrie; the former visualized and saw his story primarily as picture, the latter mainly heard it. We shall do Mr. Joyce an injustice if we attribute a normal sensory basis to

him, and then accuse him of deliberate offence. His work is not to be put out of court on this score.

But that is by the way. The value of Mr. Joyce's book has little to do with its incidental insanitary condition. Like some of the best novels in the world, it is the story of an education; it is by far the most living and convincing picture that exists of an Irish Catholic upbringing. The writing is great writing. It is a mosaic of jagged fragments that does altogether render with extreme completeness the growth of a rather secretive, imaginative boy in Dublin. The technique is startling, but on the whole it succeeds. Like Mr. Shaw and many other Irish writers, Mr. Joyce is a bold experimentalist with paragraph and punctuation. He breaks away from scene to scene without a hint of the change of time and place; at the end he passes suddenly from the third person to the first; and he uses no inverted commas to mark off his speeches. The first trick I found sometimes tiresome here and there, but then my own disposition, perhaps acquired at the blackboard, is to mark off and underline rather fussily, and I do not know whether I was so much put off the thing myself as anxious, which after all was not my business, about its effect on those others; the second trick, I will admit, seems entirely justified in this particular instance by its success; the third reduces Mr. Joyce to a free use of dashes. One conversation in this book is a superb success, the one in which Mr. Dedalus carves the Christmas turkey; I write with all due deliberation that Sterne himself could not have done it better; but most of the talk flickers blindingly with these dashes, one has the same wincing feeling of being flicked at that one used to have in the early cinema shows. I think Mr. Joyce has failed to discredit the inverted commas.

The interest of the book depends entirely upon its quintessential and unflinching reality. One believes in Stephen Dedalus as one believes in few characters in fiction. And the peculiar lie of the interest for the intelligent reader is the convincing revelation it makes of the limitations of a great mass of Irishmen. Mr. Joyce tells us unsparingly of the adolescence of this youngster under conditions that have passed almost altogether out of English life. There is an immense shyness, a profound secrecy, about matters of sex, with its inevitable accompaniment of nightmare revelations and furtive scribbles in unpleasant places, and there is a living belief in a real hell. The description of Stephen listening without a doubt to two fiery sermons on that tremendous theme, his agonies of fear,—not disgust at dirtiness such as unorthodox children feel, but just fear,—his terror-inspired confession of his sins of impurity to a strange priest in a distant part of the city, is like nothing in any boy's experience who has been trained under modern conditions. Compare its stuffy horror with Conrad's account of how, in analogous circumstances, Lord Jim wept. And a second thing of immense significance to the English reader is the fact that everyone in this story, every human being, accepts as a matter of course, as a thing in nature like the sky and the sea, that the English are to be hated. There is no discrimination in that hatred, there is no gleam of recognition that a considerable number of Englishmen have displayed a very earnest disposition to put matters right with Ireland, there is an absolute absence of any idea of a discussed settlement, any notion of helping the slow-witted Englishman in his three-cornered puzzle between North and South. It is just hate, a cant cultivated to the pitch of monomania, an ungenerous violent direction of the mind. That is the political atmosphere in which Stephen Dedalus grows up, and in which his essentially responsive mind orients itself. I am afraid it is only too true an account of the atmosphere in which a number of brilliant young Irishmen have grown up. What is the good of pretending that the extreme Irish "patriot" is an equivalent and parallel of the English or American Liberal? He is narrower and intenser than any English Tory. He is the most antiquated bigot in Western Europe. He will be the natural ally of the Tory in delaying our social and economic reconstruction after the war. He will play into the hands of the Tories by threatening an outbreak and providing the bogey of excuse for a militarist reaction in England. It is time we faced the truth of that. No reason in that why we should not do justice to Ireland, but excellent reason for bearing in mind that these bright green young people from across the Channel are something quite different from our-



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#### CAPITAL AND PROGRESS.

**"The Progress of Capitalism in England."** By W. CUNNINGHAM, D.D. (Cambridge University Press. 3s. net.)

THERE is every reason to believe that after the war increased attention will be devoted in our colleges and schools to the study of English Economic History; and this new book on "The Progress of Capitalism in England" is a welcome addition to the literature on the subject. It is the work of a distinguished economic historian, whose "Growth of English Industry and Commerce" deserves to rank high among the historical productions of the nineteenth century, not only as an important contribution to knowledge, but also as a stimulus and source of inspiration to other investigators in the same field. The present book contains the "substance of lectures delivered at the London School of Economics," and while it covers ground that is now very familiar, it is decidedly a "useful appendix" to the larger work. We are glad that Dr. Cunningham has discarded the chronological arrangements and "political divisions" which "supply the framework" of the earlier book, and treats economic history as an independent subject of study, untrammelled by the limitations and conventions of political history. The gain is enormous both in raising the dignity of the subject to its proper level, and in affording scope for a just and adequate presentation of the material.

Anyone who seeks to penetrate into the mysteries of his economic environment is apt to be bewildered by the intricacy and complexity of our modern social system. Most people, indeed, are dimly aware of the existence of grave social evils; they understand vaguely that a multitude of economic problems are crying out for solution; but they find it difficult to grasp the bearing of these problems, because they are appallingly ignorant of the historical circumstances which have given birth to the society in which they live. Hence they become easy victims of propagandists as ignorant as themselves, but able to present a specious case in favor of their ill-considered schemes. The danger of being led astray by illusory remedies was never greater than at the present moment, when the problems of industrial and agrarian reconstruction are already looming on the horizon; and the need, therefore, was never greater for the exercise of a "cultivated judgment" in the handling and solving of these problems. As Dr. Cunningham rightly insists: "The anomalies and controversies of the present day only become intelligible when we understand their genesis." This, let it be remarked, is no arm-chair philosophy, no academic plea for abstract study divorced from all relation with the realities of life. On the contrary. The study of economic history has a very practical value in the help which it affords "in applying the experience of the past to the solution of the problems of the present day." But in order to obtain "a clear insight into the conditions of the present," it is, first of all, necessary "to arrange the facts, so that the bearing of the past may be easily apprehended and fully appreciated." This Dr. Cunningham has done by tracing the progress of capitalism, following the course of the one thread which enables us to unravel the tangled skein of social evolution.

The book is divided into three parts. In the first, Dr. Cunningham vindicates the importance of the study of economic history not as a mere matter of "idle pedantry," but "for the understanding of present-day problems"; in the second, he gives "in briefest outline" a historical sketch of the progress of capitalism in this country; and in the concluding pages of the book he indicates some of the lessons which the experience of the past, in his opinion, appears to inculcate. This last section is likely to arouse dissent on certain points, but at least everyone will agree whole-heartedly with his plea for the raising of the standard of living among the rural population of England.

We have no space to comment at length on Dr. Cunningham's views on present-day controversies: but we should

like to suggest some modifications of detail in the historical portion of the book. The eleventh-century manor is described as "a unit for fiscal purposes" (p. 40). Presumably Dr. Cunningham has in mind here Maitland's famous theory that the manor in its origin was a fiscal institution, intended to serve as a unit of assessment and the channel of payment for our earliest national tax—the Danegeld. But this theory is open to insuperable objections, and there can be hardly any question that the vill (the township), not the manor, was the fiscal unit. Again, the description of the Domesday manor as "a unit for the organization of agriculture" applies at the best only to one-half of England—the portion represented by the old kingdom of Wessex. In the Danelaw the manors are still in a rudimentary state of growth; and in a great many cases they are the centres of jurisdiction (sokes), or tributary organizations, but not units of husbandry. The north-eastern part of England, in fact, was covered with numerous so-called "manors," none of which would be recognized by economic historians as coming within the compass of economic analysis. The statement that "all the stock, belonging either to the lord or his tenants, was free to run upon the common waste" (p. 41) needs qualification; definite rules "stinted"—that is, regulated—the use of the commons, and rights of common were carefully apportioned to the holdings in the open fields. Dr. Cunningham inclines to the opinion that at first there were "no money payments between the villeins and the lord"; but the numerous rents in money recorded in the Domesday Survey make it probable that in earlier times the villeins discharged their liabilities largely in money—the imposition of increased labor services being one of the fruits of the Norman Conquest. More important is the suggestion that "foreign trade was entirely in the hands of aliens" (p. 70)—a statement which conflicts with the clear and unmistakable evidence of the Patent Rolls that long before "the end of the fourteenth century" (p. 71) Englishmen were competing with the alien in foreign trade. Nor should we agree that in demanding higher wages after the Black Death, the English agricultural laborer was "taking advantage of a national calamity" (p. 52). In the first place, prices were rising as a result of the plague, and one chronicler (Knighton) even asserts that "what in former times was worth a penny now was worth four or five times as much." In the second place, the landlords could well afford in many cases an increase in their wages-bill, judging at least from the ministerial accounts of the Bishop of Winchester, one of the greatest landowners of the country. A rich harvest of fines (succession duties) was pouring into their treasury as a result of the mortality, and this must have helped them a great deal in tiding over the difficulties occasioned by the temporary dislocation of the economic system. On page 96 Miss M. Sellers appears, by a misprint, as the editor of the "Merchant Adventurers of Newcastle," instead of Mr. J. R. Boyle and Mr. F. W. Dendy.

Turning to the more general aspects of the subject, one clear fact emerges from this book: Capital is "a factor which makes for progress." But this does not imply that capitalism, the peculiar form of social organization which was evolved in the nineteenth century as the result of the unrestricted activities of private capitalists, is a force for good. The economic historian who is concerned with the vicissitudes of economic organisms through the ages is in no danger of forgetting what the economist, with his attention concentrated exclusively on the phenomena which he observes around him (and sometimes regardless even of these), is so easily apt to overlook—namely, that the terms "economic progress" and "social welfare" express ideas which are not necessarily complementary. Economic progress is often achieved at the expense of social welfare, for the interests of a class are frequently at variance with those of society. The eighteenth century, for example, witnessed a great development in English agriculture, but this development was accompanied by the ruin of the English yeomanry, the sturdy peasant farmers who were the champions of constitutional freedom in the seventeenth century, the most uncorrupted and intelligent portion of the political electorate in the eighteenth century, and throughout the mainstay and backbone of English rural society. Was such a price worth paying?

In any discussion of capital, we shall do well, then, to be careful in our use of the term "progress." We must not

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take it for granted that we are always advancing towards the light; that every step we take upon the path of national development is necessarily a step in the right direction; and that, even if we sometimes make mistakes, we are, nevertheless, "muddling through." This is a facile, fatal philosophy—food for children, not for thinking men. The real criterion of national prosperity is not the amount of wealth which is being produced in a country, but the manner of its distribution. The concentration of wealth in the hands of the few may occasion grave injury to the nation as a whole; and, therefore, the only really sound test of "economic progress" is the condition of the working-classes upon whose physical and social well-being the foundations of society must ultimately rest. If we adopt this standard of inquiry, we shall not be led astray by the glamor of statistics, and we shall avoid in consequence many of the pitfalls which lie in the path of unwary economic investigators.

#### SLINGS AND ARROWS.

"Tricks of the Trade." By J. C. SQUIRE. (Secker. 2s. 6d. net.)

In this, his latest foray, Mr. Squire bids farewell to parody, and makes peace with his victims. We protest: here is a free, care-dulling, heart-easing gift which the possessor of it proposes to deny to his fellows, and, like a curmudgeon, locks up in his breast. "A not wholly admirable art," he says, and we can see Mr. Stiggins—and the authors transfixed and gory at Mr. Squire's feet—viewing it in that light. But for the parodist himself to turn his cheek not to some alien smiter, but himself—that is either a surplus modesty, a too-great solemnity for a parodist to assume in a book of parodies, or a skinflint depreciation of his own bounties. Why should Mr. Squire be ashamed of his art? He has not the excuse of doing it badly—indeed, for a writer whose heart is not altogether in his work, he is a miracle of deadly liveliness. Parody indeed is not so fine an exercise of literature as satire; it has, if you care to screw up your eyes at it, a something negative and second-hand in its constitution. But it requires a very considerable dexterity, an acute impressionability to styles, neatness, precision, and wit in no small measure, and certain qualities of temperament. But it is in its power of conferring pleasure that its great virtue lies. All are, even the most sombre and tragic, ultimately gives pleasure, but of a rarefied, peculiar, and complex kind. Parody, on the other hand, provided that the reader has a running familiarity with the thing parodied, gives more straightforward enjoyment to be tasted by simple and intellectual alike. Parody, again, may have something of a moral purpose. Historically, it has been only a crusader incidentally; it has preferred (as Mr. Squire prefers) to play the bold bandit upon whatever traveller comes its way. For all that, if skilfully used, it can be a pretty sharp antidote to the poison of literary pretentiousness, pomposity, speciousness, or mannerism. No, Mr. Squire is the best parodist now writing, and for an author to apologize for a form of expression he can use always well, and sometimes superlatively, provides the public who enjoys it with a just quarrel against him.

The charming combinations in "Tricks of the Trade" are not all of equal excellence. There are two on Mr. Masfield's sanguinary dialectician-cum-daffodilly manner, but Mr. Squire has his own precedent in a previous volume to live up to, and Mr. Masfield himself does not startle us nowadays quite so much as he did. The study of an Imagist writing the "Lotus-Eaters" is a little too broad, a little too facile, and "If almost any Elizabethan had written 'She Dwelt among the Untrodden Ways'" rather too much of an exercise. Almost anybody, fairly well acquainted with the Elizabethan method, might have done it by simply putting down on paper a series of characteristically Elizabethan turns of phrase. The Wordsworth parody is clever in patches, and that on Mr. Wells, though extremely amusing, a trifle obvious.

On the other hand, there are some dashing excursions in Mr. Squire's best manner. His felicity in Byronism is extraordinary ("If Lord Byron had written 'The Passing of Arthur'"), and full of witty touches. This is the last stanza:—

"What followed after this (although my trade is Romantic verse) is quite beyond my lay,  
For automobile barges full of ladies,  
Singing and weeping, never come my way.  
Though, for that matter, I was once in Cadiz—  
—But never mind. It will suffice to say  
That in his final act our old friend Malory  
Was obviously playing to the gallery."

The second part of Sir Rabindranath Tagore's "Little Drops of Water":—

"Child, I smelt the flowers,  
The golden flowers . . . hiding in crowds like fairies at my feet,  
And as I smelt them the endless smile of the infinite broke over me, and I knew that they and you and I were one.  
They and you and I, the cowherds and the cows, the jewels and the potter's wheel, the mothers and the light in baby's eyes.  
For the sempstress, when she takes one stitch, may make nine unnecessary;  
And the smooth and shining stone that rolls and rolls, like the great river, may gain no moss,  
And it is extraordinary what a lot you can do with a platitude, when you dress it up in Blank Prose.  
Child, I smelt the flowers."

That on Canon Rawnsley—*simplex munditiis*:—

"Britannia mourns for good grey heads that fall,  
Survivors from our great Victoria's reign;  
For they were men; name them for all in all,  
We shall not look upon their like again."

Lastly, the brilliant parody on Mr. W. H. Davies:—

"A poor old man  
Who has no bread,  
He nothing can  
To get a bed.  
He has a cough,  
Bad boots he has;  
He takes them off  
Upon the grass.  
He does not eat  
In cosy inns,  
But keeps his meat  
In salmon tins.  
No oven hot,  
No frying-pan;  
Thank God I'm not  
That poor old man."

Really, if we had not been made author-wise, we might almost have called that one of Mr. Davies's least successful poems. It catches the external manner incomparably. And there are others nearly or quite as good. As a reviewer once said of Mr. Belloc's verses:—"More of this, Mr. Squire, more of this."

#### GREGOROVITCH.

"The Fishermen." By DMITRI GREGOROVITCH. With Preface by Dr. A. S. RAPPOPORT. (Stanley Paul. 6s.)

DR. A. S. RAPPOPORT says "experience has taught me that as a rule prefaces, if read at all, are read after the book has been perused," but he neglects to give us what a foreword to a Russian classic, new to our public, should certainly contain, viz., a few facts about the author's life and his place in the national literature. We have to turn to other sources to learn that Gregorovitch (whose first novel, "The Village," 1846, inspired Turgenev to compose "The Sportsman's Sketches," which hastened the emancipation of the Serfs) was only half-Russian, his mother being a Frenchwoman. Kropotkin tells us that "his education was entirely foreign, that he never really lived the village life, and that he was a painter as well as a novelist." Gregorovitch, therefore, who seems to have owed a debt both to Fourier's Socialistic teaching and to George Sand, saw Russian peasant life with a fresh, critical eye, and no doubt it was owing to his "advanced" ideas that he so boldly attacked serfdom in his early novels. He was accused of "superfluous sentimentality and of striving after ideals," and we are told that his most popular novel, "Anton the Unfortunate," had a success comparable with that of "Uncle Tom's Cabin." In "The Fishermen," 1853, however, Gregorovitch cannot be accused of sentimentality. As Dr. Rappoport remarks, "he is an idealist, no doubt, but his idealism is rooted in reality." "The Fishermen" might be classed among the "ethnological" novels, a species in which Russian literature is specially rich. Gregorovitch was an acute and patient observer, who possessed sufficient artistic talent to tell a

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## ECONOMY IN COOKING

Amongst many things that the war has taught us, by no means least in national importance is the lesson of economy in food and fuel which the patriotic housewife has perforce to learn. It is her laudable ambition not only to keep within the limits sanctioned by the Food Controller but to go one better—say, by saving on the meat allowance, to economise on what is ordinarily the most expensive item in her commissariat.

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straightforward story in which the life of distinctive types of the town working class and the peasants is shown truthfully and naturally.

"The Fishermen" is a picturesque study of the people settled on the banks of the Oka, a broad river which separates the province of Moscow from Toulga. In the first chapter we see the destitute Uncle Akim, with his illegitimate child, little Grishka, journeying to the izba of the fisherman, Glyeb Savinitch, in the hope, his last, of finding a home to shelter them. The characters of both men are strongly drawn, the weak and loquacious Uncle Akim, a failure in everything he undertakes, and Glyeb, stern, shrewd, firm as a rock, and absolute master in his own household. He keeps his wife, his grown-up sons and their wives firmly in subjection, and the fear that he inspires by his iron will and power of work is typical of the patriarchal rule which Turgenev has described in "Hor and Kalenitch," and Gorky in "On a Raft." Glyeb, after playing cat and mouse with the despairing Akim, at last consents to feed him and his boy in return for their labor, while his married sons, Peter and Vassili, seize their opportunity to escape his patriarchal bondage. But it is an ill day for Glyeb when he shelters the wanderers, and for his friend, Uncle Kondrati, the meek, kindly old fisherman who lives with his granddaughter Dounia in a little hut across the river. For the lad Grishka is an incorrigible character, clever and sharp, but reckless and bad-hearted. As the chronicle progresses, we see Dounia falling in love with Grishka, and neglecting her old playmate, Vania, Glyeb's youngest son, a gentle, sweet, and thoughtful lad. Grishka ends by seducing Dounia, and Vania, heart-broken, sacrifices himself, and insists on going for a soldier in Grishka's place. The scene of Vania's parting from his father and mother and from the home of his childhood is famous in Russian literature for its pathos and truth, and indeed in these chapters where Gregorovitch describes the attachment of the peasant to the soil, and the household tragedy when the loved son is torn away from the homestead, the author rises to his highest level.

Old Glyeb, broken up by the scattering of his family, for he has quarrelled with the two elder sons, now having to replace Vania's labor, goes to Komarevo, the neighboring town, and hires Zakhar, a dissipated factory hand. This episode gives Gregorovitch the opportunity for a skilful analysis of the causes why the introduction of factory life among a peasant community always ruins and depraves them morally. His demonstration, made in 1846, has world-wide truth. Whether it be eighteenth-century England or twentieth-century Russia, Japan, Ceylon, &c., the observer has always remarked that the young peasant who goes into the factory is soon ruined spiritually, and that the loose morals of industrial life soon destroy "a healthy family life, which in all classes, and especially that of the peasants, is the true basis of happiness." The spoiled dandy, Zakhar, "a typical product of the factory," up to every sort of trick, fascinates Grishka, and the latter soon takes to drink, and neglects both his work and his wife. There is a powerful scene, when old Glyeb, waking up to the fact that Zakhar is not only ruining Grishka but is also coveting his young wife, kicks Zakhar out of the house; but the mischief is done, and Grishka does not mend his ways. Then comes the final break-up of the old fisherman, his oak-like strength of former days suddenly abandons him, and he takes to lying on the top of the oven, from which soon he can no longer move. Here, again, Gregorovitch is very interesting in his description of the extraordinary endurance of the Russian peasant, who, if he survives the ordeals of his youth, becomes proof against hardships and privations that would kill an ordinary man. After Glyeb's death, Grishka dissipates the little family patrimony, squanders the hoardings, and ends by robbing the women folk of their domestic possessions. Finally, when the police are after him, he drowns himself in the river. In these later chapters one takes Gregorovitch's measure as an artist. He is too discursive, and has not much sense of composition. He draws his characters with firm, living strokes, and has a fair psychological gift, but his drama is one played by types rather than by individuals. He is excellent in straightforward descriptions of nature, and of a particular locality. Altogether, we may call him a valuable writer of the second rank.

## The Week in the City.

As the Government apparently claims the right under the Defence of the Realm Act to suspend any law during the war, and to govern the country by proclamations or decrees without the legislative co-operation of Parliament, the Stock Exchange was somewhat reassured by the speech which Mr. Neville Chamberlain delivered to its members on Tuesday; for he said definitely that the Government did not intend to close the Stock Exchange, though he thought it might have to be closed down for one day in the week, and possibly for some additional hours, in order that the energies of members might be diverted into work of a more definitely national character—whatever that may mean. Business has remained very quiet, though the War Loan is now closed. The weekly revenue returns show that the Exchequer has received from that source over 320 millions, and that Treasury Bills have been reduced from the high record of 1,359 millions to the more satisfactory figure of 809 millions sterling. On Wednesday money became more plentiful, and the charge for day-to-day loans fell to 4 per cent. On the other hand, discount rates hardened to 5 3-16. Gilt-edged securities were rather firmer, and Japanese Bonds, which had been weak for some days, recovered.

### THE UNDERGROUND ELECTRIC.

Some disappointment was caused by the announcement of a final dividend of 2 per cent. upon the 6 per cent. Income bonds of the Underground Electric Railways Company of London, making 5 per cent. for the year, as compared with the full 6 per cent. for the three previous years. The Company is a holding concern deriving its income mainly from its holdings in the tube railways, the Metropolitan District Railway, and the London General Omnibus Company. All these companies show higher net profits for the past year, and inability to pay the full 6 per cent. dividend is due, first, to the fact that the holding company's income from all sources is lower; secondly, it has made losses on exchange transactions; and, thirdly, the rise in the income tax has been an additional burden for the dividend on the 4½ per cent. bonds and on the 6 per cent. income bonds is paid free of tax. The loss by exchange and extra income tax together amounted to £56,000. The Underground Company could have paid the full 6 per cent. had the railways reduced their special allocations to various funds. But in view of present conditions, the companies wisely decided to strengthen the financial position rather than increase their distributions any further. The announcement of the reductions in the dividend on Underground Electric Income bonds was followed by a sharp fall in the price, and the yield at present is over 8 per cent., allowing for income tax on over 6 per cent. net.

### BRADFORD DYERS' PROSPERITY.

Following an excellent recovery in profits in 1915, the report for 1916 of the Bradford Dyers' Association shows that last year was a far better one for the Company than could possibly have been anticipated, as will be seen from the following summary of recent results:—

	Net Profit.	Depreciation & Reserve.	Prof. Div.	Ord. Dividend.	Carried Forward.
	£	£	£	Amount. Rate. %	£
1912	410,861	90,000	125,000	81,389 6	+ 49,737
1913	430,081	160,000	125,000	94,955 7	+ 17,842
1914	387,923	90,000	125,000	67,824 5	+ 35,409
1915	568,623	244,628	125,000	135,648 10	+ 6,021
1916	801,125	311,000	125,000	205,472 15	+ 102,709

Thus, as compared with 1914, net profit more than doubled. This year's figure is arrived at after making allowance for the estimated requirements of income and excess profits tax. A sum of £150,000 is placed to reserve, the employers' fund receives £60,000, as against £10,000 a year ago, £10,000 is set aside for investment contingencies, and £90,000 for depreciation. After making these appropriations and paying the preference dividend, a dividend of 10 per cent. and a bonus of 5 per cent. is paid on the ordinary, comparing with a total distribution of 10 and 5 per cent. in the two preceding years, and the balance carried forward is increased by over £102,000. The balance sheet shows the usual strong position, and the Company has evidently benefited enormously from the increase of war business.

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